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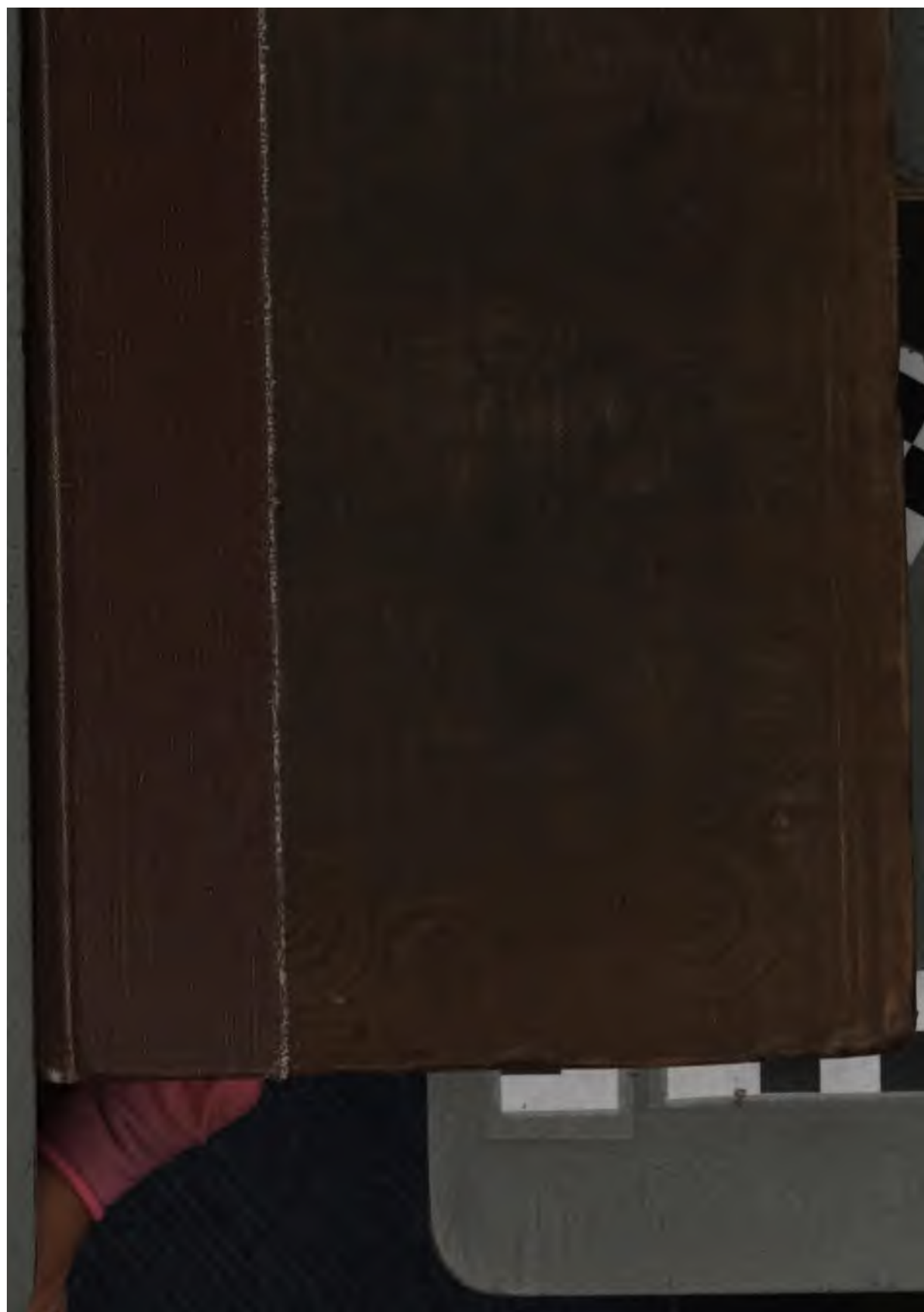
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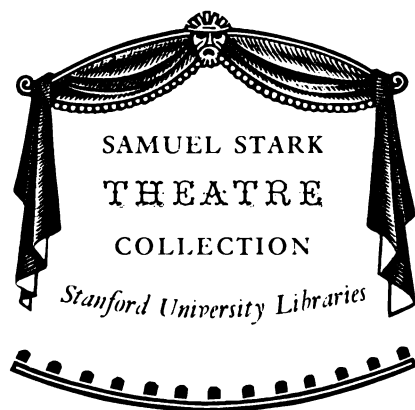
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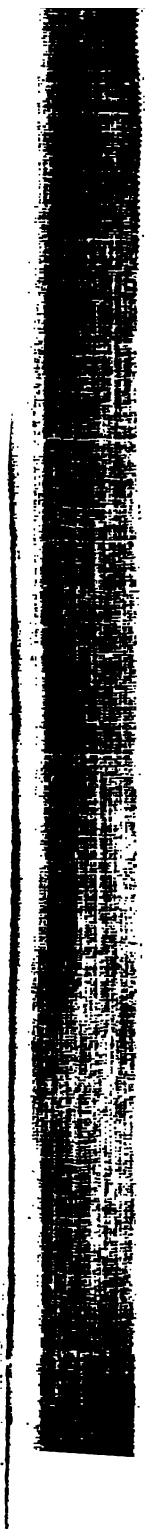
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# ANECDOTES OF ACTORS:

WITH OTHER

DESULTORY RECOLLECTIONS,

ETC. ETC. ETC.

BY MRS. MATHEWS,

AUTHOR OF THE "MEMOIRS OF CHARLES MATHEWS, COMEDIAN,"  
TO WHICH THIS IS A SUPPLEMENTARY VOLUME.

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TO

CHARLES JAMES MATHEWS,

FROM HIS AFFECTIONATE MOTHER,

ANNE MATHEWS.

OLD BROMPTON,  
*April*, 1844.





## CONTENTS.

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
BANNISTER AND MR. HEATH . . . . .	7
BANNISTER AND HIS TOUPÉE . . . . .	18
DOWTON AND RUSSELL . . . . .	25
FAWCETT . . . . .	36
QUICK AND HIS SPOILED CHILD . . . . .	43
HOLLAND AND KEMBLE . . . . .	47
MUNDEN . . . . .	57
SOWERBY . . . . .	61
DIGNUM . . . . .	66
COOKE IN LONDON . . . . .	83
COOKE IN AMERICA . . . . .	93
COOKE IN SCOTLAND . . . . .	96
COOKE IN SHYLOCK . . . . .	100
SUETT AND HIS SON THEOPHILUS . . . . .	104
SUETT'S FUNERAL . . . . .	109
KNIGHT AND MATHEWS . . . . .	112
KNIGHT TRAVELLING . . . . .	117
DODD . . . . .	120
TALMA . . . . .	125

	PAGE
MRS. JORDAN AND MISS POPE . . .	128
HENRY SIDDONS AND MATHEWS . . .	130
CLAREMONT AND JOHN KEMBLE . . .	133
CHERRY . . . . .	137
MATHEWS AND SPRING . . . . .	139
MEREDETH . . . . .	145
JONES . . . . .	146
INCLEDON AND HIS MADEIRA . . .	153
MATHEWS AND YATES . . . . .	160
MATHEWS AT BRIGHTON . . . . .	166
MASTER BETTY . . . . .	167
MATHEWS AND DENMAN . . . . .	176
MATHEWS'S GALLERY-GRIEVANCES . .	183
MATHEWS RURALIZING . . . . .	189
ELLISTON . . . . .	192
LISTON . . . . .	201

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### DESULTORY RECOLLECTIONS.

COLMAN THE YOUNGER . . . . .	223
COLMAN, MAJOR PYE, AND MATHEWS'S PARROT	228
CURRAN AND IRISH JOHNSTONE . . .	233
RANDOLPH . . . . .	236
INGLEBY AND MISS BIFFIN . . . . .	238

**CONTENTS.****vii**

	<b>PAGE</b>
<b>SIR JOHN STEVENSON</b> . . .	<b>241</b>
<b>MRS. CHARLES KEMBLE</b> . . .	<b>242</b>
<b>MR. WILBERFORCE AND THE SPEAKER</b> . . .	<b>244</b>
<b>THEODORE HOOK'S HOAXES</b> . . .	<b>246</b>
<b>BLISSETT, THE BATH COMEDIAN</b> . . .	<b>257</b>
<b>ANACREON MOORE, AND MR. O'NEIL</b> . . .	<b>261</b>
<b>PITT</b> . . . . .	<b>264</b>
<b>MARTIN OF GALWAY</b> . . . . .	<b>257</b>
<b>MATHEWS AT FULHAM</b> . . . . .	<b>270</b>
<b>MANAGER MASTERMAN</b> . . . . .	<b>272</b>
<b>THEODORE HOOK, 1841</b> . . . . .	<b>274</b>

---

**MISCELLANEA.**

<b>LOOSE THOUGHTS ON MONOMANIA</b> . . .	<b>293</b>
<b>MURDER AND MYSTERY</b> . . . . .	<b>306</b>
<b>BACHELOR'S WIVES</b> . . . . .	<b>345</b>
<b>MARKED MEN</b> . . . . .	<b>369</b>
<b>UN RÉDUIT CHAMPÊTRE, OR THE MISERIES OF A CAKEHOUSE</b> . . . . .	<b>384</b>
<b>LETTER TO THE MESSIEURS OF THE DIURNAL PRESS</b>	<b>421</b>



## · ANECDOTES OF ACTORS.

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“ What players are they ?

Even those you were wont to take such delight in.”

*Hamlet.*

A VERY high authority \* has pronounced that to be a laudable curiosity which leads men to seek out the private histories and characters of those persons who have astonished the world by their exploits, or enlightened it by their genius. Their manners, habits, and even their *foibles*, are admitted to be objects of a natural, justifiable interest and inquiry to the world. Under such liberal admission of the popular right, its influence over dramatic genius must necessarily be included.

Actors are indubitably the legitimate property of

\* Dr. Johnson.

the public. Their talents,—nay, their very persons, when labouring in their vocation, are no more their own than are the various characters which they of necessity assume upon the stage, where each man has, in effect, made over to his audience a lease of his personal tenement, which is at once mortgaged for a *con-si-de-ra-tion*, and unredeemable until the fall of the green curtain. While upon *the boards*, actors are not only “her majesty’s servants,” but the vassals of all those who, for the time, possess the purchased right not only to a taste of their quality, but to pronounce upon its flavor according to the particular relish imbibed by their various palates, humours, and tastes, from that very gentlemanlike personage without a coat in the one-shilling gallery, whose stentorian lungs from time to time enforce the general “*Silence!*” and the little ragamuffin boy who comes in at half-price, with a chartered privilege of disturbing the whole house with his shrill penny-trumpet voice, and his vociferous “*Hencore!*” down to the grave gentleman in black who is seated in critical majesty in the front row of the pit. All, from the ceiling to the basement of the building, sit invested in the brief authority of the hour, and exercise it accordingly, to the very extent of their immunity, either to hiss or applaud, approve or condemn to laugh *at* the actor or weep *with* him (as the case may be), in full impunity of power, at the small cost of from one shilling to seven per night. At such low price

John Bull claims—in commercial phrase—the indisputable privilege of using up the “article” for which he has paid “cash,” according to his own peculiar fancy and humour, rigorously exacting his money’s worth. Nor is he satisfied with fair and full measure of the commodity, but demands a something “*in*,” “an overplus,” in an *encore* of his favourite song, or “a blessing,” in the reproduction of a chosen performer upon the stage-counter, whereon he is required to appear *au naturel* when his work is done, and bend with due humility to his patrons—the aforesaid coatless gentleman and six-penny-boy—in acknowledgment and thanks for their “sweet voices” vouchsafed to him. But with the last exacted bow ends the tyranny of the powers that be—the “royalties and rights” of the gallery-gods and other presiding dominations of the night are at an end—the serf is enfranchised!—and nothing then remains for unsceptred majesty, “the people,” but to crawl languidly out of the gorgeous temple of their late triumphs, and creep back to their dull homes, and dream of lost dominion. Haply, a portion of them lagging behind to cumber the stage-door entrance, for the extra-over-and-above gratification of witnessing, “*free gratis for nothing*,” the final exit of their chief favourites, the going-out of the brightest stars of the night, catch the outline of their enveloped figures, as they hurriedly ascend, with muffled faces, their attendant carriage, and see them pull down the *mystic* blinds,



and drive off rapidly home. Home! ay, *there's the rub!* Not *one* of the spectators can follow them *there!* no money can purchase a key to the blue chamber of an actor's privacy, no *order* achieve the *open sesamé!* of his street door, when once closed upon the generous public. There is no *free admission* for the liberal patrons of the actor, but within the walls of the theatre, whence they may pursue him to the utmost limits of open space; but once within his own domestic fence, he is invisible to outward ken.

How, then, are the habits and casualties of an actor's private life to be ascertained? How is the "laudable curiosity" of the world to be satisfied? It is notorious that such individuals are peculiarly jealous of undue personal notice; the more eminent, the more popular an actor is in his professional career, the more reserved and impenetrable to the "general" when once ensconced behind the arras of domestic privacy. The performer who lives in the full glare of the public eye three parts of his life will be found most tenacious of his right to dispose of the fourth without observation, interruption, or publicity; hence it follows, that those who admire the humour of a comedian *on* the stage, little reckon what may be his humour elsewhere. The merry *droll* of farce is probably a very dull fellow in the drama of domestic life; and the man who has made his audience roar with laughter, under the reiterated strokes of his comicality, may soon after

make his children roar with agony, under the repeated lashes of his cane ; the tenderly impassioned lover may be found to be a terribly passionate husband ; the submissive wife, a brawling virago ; the miser in *the scene*, a very spendthrift out of it (and *vice versa*) : in short, as no true estimate of the *man* can be formed from an acquaintance with the *actor*, it naturally and reasonably becomes a question of some concern, *what he really is* when his "lendings" are "off," and he returns unto *himself* : and an inquiry ensues as to how he comports himself with his *family and friends* ; how he eats, drinks, sleeps, walks, talks, when he has no part to play ; whether he is, what by outward show he appears—namely, a thing of flesh and blood, with appetites, passions, amusements, griefs, and gratifications, in common with his fellow-men ; whether, like them, he is possessed of "organs, dimensions, senses, affections ; fed with the same food ; hurt with the same weapons ; subject to the same diseases ; healed by the same means ; warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer ;" or whether he is in fact a thing of shreds and patches ; a soulless being formed and set apart for the mere purpose of amusement to dull humanity ; to be laughed at in a comical garb ; stared at in a gorgeous one ; encored in a good song, hissed in a bad one ; dismissed from his toil with plaudits or neglect, to remain, like other cold-blooded animals, torpid, until again drawn

forth and warmed into action and the fitful fulfilment of his destiny. The speculation is, indeed, at once delicate and interesting, touching the real nature, feelings, and faculties of actors out of the scene of their histrionic excellence; and it is no mean boast in the writer of these remarks that she has crossed the very threshold which has divided the "curious" from their insight to the private natures and pursuits of public performers; and, having passed the Rubicon, plunged into the very heart of their mystery, she now offers up to her readers the conclusion to which her personal observations have brought her—namely, that *actors*, however they may seem in public, are merely *human beings*! endowed with the same tastes and faculties as others boast, subject to the like frailties, capable of the same virtues, and liable, alas! to the the same errors and mutations, and all the numerous humours, accidents, and sorrows that mortality is heir to; and even as "Punch has feelings," so have actors, although they are often treated as if they had none. In fine, gentle reader—*theatrical* reader!—if you will peruse the following instances, you will find that these, the "abstract and brief chronicles of the time," are, as we ourselves are,—creatures but of time and circumstance, governed by the same casualties, moved by the same weaknesses, open to the same mistakes, instigated by the same temptations, liable to the same—but hold!—something too much of this

I find that I have been edging myself into your presence somewhat in the fashion of a pedlar, who brings himself and his pack into your room *sideways*. In further imitation of his mode of "doing business," I shall therefore open my miscellaneous wares piecemeal, for your inspection, trusting that my light merchandise may be recommended by the present samples, and that the commodities may so far please as to ensure your future custom, and a speedy order *for more of the same "article."*

BANNISTER, THE COMEDIAN, AND MR. HEATH.

At the time when "all the world" went to Paris, Mr. John Bannister, the celebrated comedian, and Mr. Heath, the equally eminent engraver,\* agreed to go thither together as soon as their respective avocations permitted them to leave London; and late in the autumn these old friends and cronies reached Dover one evening, with the intention of crossing over to Calais early the following morning.

Fatigued by their day's journey, the travellers partook of an early supper, and retired to rest in a double-bedded room (the only one in the house found disengaged); Mr. Bannister going up first, and Mr. Heath following as soon as he ascertained that his co-partner was in bed, previously leaving

\* Father to the *Annual* Heath.

orders to be called betimes for the packet. Accordingly, before daybreak "Boots" kicked up a great dust at the chamber-door of the sleepers, leaving thereat a pitcher of hot water, but no light ; and Mr. Bannister having rung the bell at his bed's head for candles, without receiving any notice from the hurried servants of the hotel, the friends, not to risk the loss of their passage by delay, were fain to get through their ablutions and general toilette in the dark, for it yet wanted many minutes to daylight. Their preparations, however, were pursued with diligence ; and Mr. Bannister, being the first ready, was leaving the room, as he informed his friend, to order some breakfast, when his departure was arrested by something like a cry of pain from his hitherto silent companion, which occasioned the comedian to turn back in some alarm to inquire the cause. He was immediately answered in tones of evident distress, the nature of which it was not easy to learn, for Mr. Heath's voice was changed, and his articulation so defective, that it at once occurred to Mr. Bannister that some physical calamity had befallen his old friend ; nor was it difficult to surmise that a fit of paralysis had taken place, possibly in consequence of the previous day's unusual fatigue. This surmise soon became a conviction ; and Bannister was inexpressibly shocked. He, however, had presence of mind to recollect the propriety in such a case of calling in immediate medical advice ; and, first saying all that the kindest feeling

dictated to allay the natural distress of his poor friend, who still made violent but ineffectual attempts to be understood, Mr. Bannister groped his way down-stairs where, apprising the landlord of the melancholy event that had taken place, and requesting him to despatch a messenger for the best medical aid the town afforded, he obtained a light and returned to the bed-room, whither he was followed by the landlord. At the first glance at the object of their interest, it was apparent that Mr. Heath's calamity was partial, principally affecting his speech. His person had evidently been spared the shock of the attack ; for, at the moment of their entrance into the room, the sufferer was discovered groping about upon his hands and knees in active search, as it appeared, of something on the floor ; and upon hearing Mr. Bannister's voice, he alertly sprung upon his feet, and, running eagerly up to the light, presented a full view of his face to his friend, whose previous concern was now seriously augmented by this ocular evidence of the sad change which was visible in his poor fellow-traveller's features, as well as in his speech ! Still more impressed with the urgency of the case, Mr. Bannister made a significant sign to the landlord to see that all expedition was used to procure a doctor : and then, with feelings of the most desponding kind, and tears of compassion rolling down his cheeks, he addressed the sufferer in tones and words of the most affectionate and sympathising nature, urging him to

composure and resignation, and entreating him to undress and return to his bed until proper advice could be had. This tenderness, however, so far from assuaging the agitation of the afflicted man, served only to exasperate his misery, and, apparently, his temper. He struggled, in the greatest excitement, again and again, to render his words intelligible, and after repeated efforts, at length partially succeeded; but his success only conveyed to his hearer additional sorrow and alarm, for, from the nature of the communication so imperfectly made, Mr. Bannister felt now convinced that poor Mr. Heath's intellects were too surely impaired by the shock which his constitution had undergone, and that he no longer knew what he said or did. Under this strengthened conviction of his unhappy friend's dangerous state, Bannister became more and more impatient for the arrival of the medical gentleman, and, in the interim, he again resorted to the soothing system, which, however, produced no better effect upon the unfortunate man than the former attempt to calm him. So far, indeed, from any salutary result, sympathy seemed further to excite him; and finding all oral attempts fail in their object, poor Mr. Heath stamped about the room like a madman; and finally, in the fury of his despair, he seized Mr. Bannister (who was just making his retreat from the supposed maniac in excessive terror) stoutly by the arm, and holding his own head close to the light, he opened wide "the doors of his

face," and disclosed to his astonished friend two level rows of gums guiltless of ivory, and apparently long since relieved from all natural responsibilities ! In plain terms, Mr. Heath's mouth resembled that of a new-born infant—with this difference, *he* had evidently *cut his teeth*. Bannister was appalled, and stood gazing like Macbeth when the murdered Banquo appears before him with his gaping wounds ; and he might naturally have exclaimed, in imitation of the guilty thane—

Avaunt, and quit my sight !  
Thy *gums* are *toothless* ;  
Thou hast no *mastication* in those *jaws*  
Which thou dost gape with.  
Hence, horrible *vacuum*—hence !

The truth now broke ludicrously upon the percipient, who, with a serio-comic expression of condolence upon his friend's embarrassment, was, in spite of his good-nature, inwardly amused by this enforced revelation of a long-guarded secret ; and finding it impossible to repress his risibility, he ran once more down stairs in order to have his laugh fairly out, and to countermand the summons to the physician, as well as to make some inquiry about the alleged robbery of Mr. Heath's teeth, which the owner gravely averred to have been taken from him—*stolen while he was asleep* ! On his way he met the man who had attended them over night, of whom he enquired—" Pray waiter, have you seen Mr. Heath's *teeth* ?" which question being misinter-



preted—induced the reply of “ *No sir, not to notice 'em !*”—and Bannister proceeded. The landlord and waiters, almost turned to stone by this account, and the extraordinary accusation annexed to it, accompanied Mr. Bannister back to the chamber wherein the poor destitute gentleman was still diligently seeking for his lost *dominos*, in which search all present now assisted ; nor was it abandoned until every crevice and corner of the room, every place possible and impossible, had been examined without success.

Mr. Heath again muttered his conviction that somebody had robbed him of his teeth. By the aid of pencil and paper now supplied, he clearly explained to the anxious group that, previously to his getting into bed the preceding night, he had, after locking the bed-room door, carefully deposited his *bran-new* set of masticators in the right-hand pocket of his coat, not only for security, but concealment, till the morning ; when taking up the coat from the chair near his bedside, whereon he had laid it, he missed his teeth : they had, in fact, been extracted—taken away ! What made this account incredible to all present was, that Mr. Heath had confessedly locked the room-door *before* he shed his teeth, and no one could by any means have entered the apartment until after he had missed them the next morning. It was altogether extraordinary—inconceivable ! Nevertheless, the main fact could not be gain-said ; “ the gentleman’s teeth ” were nowhere

to be found ! The " Establishment " at this period of the case cast simultaneously a furtive glance at " the gentleman's " *friend* ; but Bannister was too much absorbed by the strange event to be aware of the half suspicions that all naturally felt, Mr. Heath included, that *he* might have something to do with the alleged abstraction. But no one ventured to breathe their imperfect thoughts ; the landlord, indeed, timidly suggested that " it was possible that the gentleman had left his teeth behind him in London, or perhaps dropped them upon the road." But Mr. Heath pettishly repelled the idea ; and Mr. Bannister very emphatically bore witness that his friend's teeth were certainly in his mouth during *supper-time*, and to the best of his belief when they wished each other good night.

Strange and inexplicable as such a theft appeared, it could no longer be doubted. *Somebody must have drawn Mr. Heath's teeth\* while he slept* ; an operation which might be supposed would baffle the skill and dexterity of Cartwright himself to perform without the concurrence of the owner. At this period of the case the servants of the hotel loudly reasserted their innocence of the alleged abstraction, and were open-mouthed to be searched,—a process promptly entered upon by the landlord, who immediately seizing upon the head-waiter, drew from his pocket a tortuous instrument, at first supposed a tooth-drawer, but which proved to be a

\* Out of his pocket.

corkscrew. This, and the indispensable napkin of his calling, was all the property found on the person of either waiter, except a silver tooth-pick, left over-night upon the supper-table, and which was now respectfully handed to Mr. Heath, but claimed by Mr. Bannister as his exclusive right. The delicate investigation ended, Mr. Heath admitted that there was not a peg on which to hang further suspicion of the parties examined ; and the friends looked at each other, as if asking what was next to be done. Neither could tell ; and the bereft gentleman threw himself upon the bed, mumbling his despair in accents at once ludicrous and pitiable.

Mr. Bannister, now that the nature and extent of his friend's disaster were explained, became once more eager to prosecute the original aim of their journey ; and he ventured to propose to Mr. Heath to proceed at once to Paris, in spite of his teeth, which he suggested might easily be replaced on their arrival in that city. But to this proceeding Mr. Heath gave a prompt and decisive negative—naturally enough averse (as his *pencil* said) to continue, during so long a journey by sea and land, without the power and means of talking or eating. He had, in fact, set his heart upon his first French dinner at Calais ; and though Bannister very considerably assured him that genuine French cookery required little or no mastication, and that without any such effort he would relish and enjoy it perfectly, Mr. Heath persisted that it was quite impossible

that any dish could prove toothsome to a man in his condition ; and declared a fixed conviction, that until he regained his teeth he could not stir a peg.

Poor Bannister, finding that Heath would not bite at his proposition, now despaired of getting on board of the packet that day ; and recollecting his own limited time, which allowed him little more than a week in Paris, he felt truly vexed, and, for *him*, very much out of temper at the provoking *contretemps*. Moodily seating himself on the edge of the bed, he slowly unfastened the woollen “ comfortable ” in which he had enveloped his throat for the voyage, and taking it off, thrust it pettishly into the depths of his coat’s ample pocket, where some unwonted substance struck sharply against his knuckles, and upon which his fingers the next moment instinctively closed. A short pause ensued, during which might have been observed in Bannister’s expressive countenance an indication of speculative surprise, which resolved itself into a grave though ludicrous suspicion, that what he held in his hand might have connexion with his friend Heath’s calamity—nay, that it might prove to be the identical object so unaccountably missing ; and slowly and cautiously dragging forth the complicated machinery, and darting at it a piercing look, compounded of curiosity and wonder at its construction, he timidly held it forth, with even childish embarrassment, while he asked, in his most deep

and tragic tones (after one of his habitual *Hems*), with great *naïveté*, “Why, Heath, my good fellow, are *these* your teeth?” (as if, at that moment, they were likely to prove any body’s else!)—“If they *are*, I assure you, *upon my honour*, that I am not aware how I came by them; for, as you see, I’ve plenty of my own, and could have no motive, my good fellow, for depriving you of yours. I really beg your pardon; at the same time presenting the teeth to his friend with the harlequin jerk of his hands so usual with him, and much in the fashion and smirk that he was wont to offer Fustian the bill of Silvester Daggerwood, “whose benefit is fixed;” and, with another of his expressive “*Hems*” in conclusion, he awaited the result.

Without a moment’s hesitation the precious fugitives were identified by their right owner, and eagerly snatched from his friend’s hand; and Mr. Heath having with prompt dexterity “posted his ivory,” he broke forth in the most articulate thanksgiving for the recovery of those pearls of price; and every mouth but his own was closed, that had before been gaping with wonder and dismay at the strange affair. Another mystery now remained to be solved; and the question naturally arose, how it came to pass that Mr. Heath’s teeth, which he had deposited within his own coat previously to his taking it off, came to be found in the pocket of Mr. Bannister’s? Here was a perplexity which none could unravel. Mr. Heath was, however,

too well pleased at the unexpected recovery of this vital portion of his animal economy to be over curious as to the manner of its loss ; and though somewhat suspicious of his friend having played him a wag's trick, he good-humouredly hastened with him to the vessel, which they happily reached in time for sailing, and it was there reserved for honest daylight to reveal what night's shadow had so concealed.

The simple fact was, that in the darkness and confusion of the morning's preparations, Mr. Bannister, who was a very absent man, in groping about the room, had unconsciously put on Mr. Heath's coat instead of his own ; and Mr. Heath afterwards finding *a* coat in about the same position in which he had placed his, over night, was equally unsuspecting of exchange. Both coats were of a similar make, both had metal buttons, and the friends not differing materially in bulk, no thought of mal-appropriation crossed the mind of either.

In conclusion to this dark transaction, it is necessary to add that the coats, though both of blue cloth, differed by a shade ; and the candle at the hotel throwing no light upon the difference, the parties most interested did not discern any variation of tint ; and it was not till they confronted each other on the deck of the vessel, "when day-light peeped," that the friends detected the cause of their late embarrassment ; they then appeared in their true colours by resuming their original habits,

which from long and intimate association, were naturally so much alike in all respects.

It may be satisfactory to the reader to be told that these worthy friends and compatriots reached Calais in perfect safety and good spirits, notwithstanding a tedious passage, the wind being *smack in their teeth* the greater part of the voyage—a circumstance of much annoyance and vexation to every passenger on board, *with the exception of Mr. Heath.*

---

The following will prove a fair *pendant* to the foregoing fact :—

#### BANNISTER AND HIS TOUPÉE.

It is well known to all who remember him, that Mr. John Bannister was a singularly handsome man in his youth ; and indeed remained such, “ with a difference,” even to the latest period of his life. In consequence of his father, Charles Bannister, the celebrated wit and excellent bass singer, continuing upon the stage long after “ Mr. Bannister, junior,” had ceased to be “ Young Bannister,” the comedian was so called later, perhaps, than his time of life strictly warranted such distinction ; but Mr. Bannister’s line of acting, after his first few years of tragedy, with which he commenced his theatrical career under the tuition and management of Garrick, was sprightly comedy and other youthful

characters, of which he kept undisputed possession when youth no longer abided. It was, therefore, desirable that he should keep up as much as possible, his juvenile reputation and appearance, which he had little difficulty in doing ; for though beyond the middle age when I first knew him, this charming man retained all the early advantages of a fine face and figure unimpaired ; and at the period alluded to, the only *falling off* that indicated the approach of the "sear and yellow leaf," was from the crown of his head, where a smooth round place had gradually but determinately asserted its independence of all natural covering.

On the first discovery of this bald place, Mr. Bannister was much chagrined ; less from personal vanity than from professional considerations, which made a fine head of hair of great importance at a time when *artistes* had not yet acquired the skill to make wigs more natural than nature herself. On this *increasing deficiency*, as I must call it, the comedian had from time to time confidentially consulted his hair-dresser, who at first added a little more powder occasionally to the "*damned spot* ;" but at length the blemish getting daily more noticeable, and Mr. Bannister more and more uneasy, his faithful confidant suggested the expedient of an addition to his employer's otherwise well-thatched head. A small plot of hair might, the barber averred, be so artfully attached with the aid of some gum to the defective



place, that it would not be possible for the most fastidious eye to detect it in public or private, especially as powder and pomatum were lavishly and universally worn. To this proposition—a truly barbarous one—Bannister gave a reluctant consent ; though at this period he might have followed the glorious example of Cæsar, and like him have boasted that he had acquired laurels sufficient to cover his baldness without less honourable aid. Nevertheless, ere long, a kindly patch of hair was skilfully applied to the denuded spot, and thenceforward constantly worn by “ Young Bannister,” whose secret was necessarily confided to Mrs. Bannister, with a solemn injunction not to admit even their children into her confidence.

As age increased, so did this baldness, which gradually reached the forehead, making together a fine expanse of polished meaning for the contemplation of a phrenologist, infinitely benevolent and intellectual ; but no one guessed the fact, for the *toupée* was as gradually enlarged as the natural covering became less, and no change in the head was to be detected except by the initiated.

After a very laborious period at the Haymarket Theatre, Mr. Bannister quitted town with his family one season on a visit to Brighton for a few weeks. His medical man having recommended sea-bathing to him to renovate his slightly impaired health. The comedian, on the day after his arrival, finding the weather bright and sunny, hastened to

the sea-side in order to take his first dip ; when having plunged himself, and remained in the water longer than the prudent period, the bather returned to the machine wherein he had left his clothes ; and having dressed himself, he proceeded to arrange his head, which he had dried ; and looking round for his *toupée*, to his great consternation it was nowhere visible, and the fatal truth at once flashed horribly athwart his mind. Bannister was, as the preceding account has described him, a very absent man ; and in his eagerness to jump into the sea, he had omitted to take off his demi-wig, which naturally forsook his head as soon as it was thoroughly saturated, without his being aware of its ungenerous secession. Bannister now recollected having seen something float near him, which he took to be a small knot of sea-weed ; and he rushed from the machine upon the sands, looking disconsolately about, upon the “ocean vast,” where wave rolled upon wave, as if in unfeeling mockery of his hope, and the missing scalp was no more seen : his “wrinkled *front* was in the deep bosom of the ocean buried !”

What a cruel blow was this to “*Young Bannister* !” Repining was useless as puerile. He had pledged himself to return home to an early dinner with his children, and feeling that he was wasting time in a vain pursuit, he at length in utter despair placed his, now much too large, hat over his eyes, and getting into a “fly,” winged his way to the High Street, wherein he remembered to have seen

a wig-maker's shop ; and where, taking the master of it confidentially into his back-parlour and closing the door, with great caution and delicacy unfolded his embarrassment, asking anxiously whether his loss could not be immediately supplied. At this the man shook his head despondingly, and then gave Mr. Bannister the sad intelligence that nothing like " the article " alluded to, was to be found ready-made in the town of Brighton ; adding, that it would take at least two days to make ; in short, that he could not undertake to have one ready before the following night. Poor Mr. Bannister, completely chap-fallen at this intelligence, suffered his head to be measured ; and, maugre his reluctance to confess to his wife his carelessness and consequent privation, at length presented himself half-shorn of his beams, at his house, where he found Mrs. Bannister and the children anxiously expecting his return, the hour fixed for dinner having some time elapsed. Unluckily a chance visitor was present, a friend whom Mrs. Bannister had pressed to stay and dine with them, and the discomfitted and dilapidated comedian was altogether dispirited and out of sorts. His wife looked anxiously in his face, and " hoped he was not ill." " No, not *ill*, but he had somehow caught cold, and begged on that account to be permitted to sit down to dinner," just then announced, " with his hat on ;" apologising for so unceremonious an act to his visitor, who, with Mrs. Bannister, unconsciously harassed him by various

suggestions for a substitute more comfortable to himself, to keep his head warm, while the children once or twice attempted to remove the hat in order to place a more seemly and agreeable covering upon his head ; and poor Bannister sat in the midst of his family like a “fretful porcupine,” with quills upreared, armed at all points to resist the threatened invasions of torturing, though well-meant kindness.

When the children had retired and the visitor departed, Bannister laid bare his distress to his wife, who, as it has been explained, was the only person of his family cognisant of the artifice he had so long practised ; and exposing his bald head, pathetically appealed to her candour to pronounce whether it did not make him look, at least, ten years older ? Mrs. Bannister could not deny the fact. The next question was, what he could do until the lost *toupée* was replaced by the one making ? What was to become of him till re-covered from his distressing accident ?

“It was so *very* awkward,” he said, “to confess to the children that he had practised such a deceit ; they would naturally laugh, too, at his present distress, and his altered looks would seem so ridiculous to young people. In short, he had not *nerve* to encounter the remarks of his children ; and if the fact could be kept from their knowledge but one day longer, all would be well ;” under these feelings, it was eventually agreed between him and his wife, that he should be confined to his room the whole of

the following day by a *severe cold in his head*. Accordingly, he appeared the next morning in his dressing-gown and slippers, and his pericranium enveloped in one of Mrs. Bannister's shawls; in which he might have been supposed to be adorned as some Eastern monarch, feeling himself, very much like *Mahomet the impostor*. Thus he sat, to the infinite amusement of one or two of his younger children, who made several sportive snatches at his turban, which, they said, "made papa look so *funny*," and which playfulness it required all the sufferer's dexterity to evade.

Thus circumstanced, it proved a balmy moment when the servant announced that "The hair-dresser had come to dress master's hair."

The children were now taken out of the room, and the *artiste* admitted with the expected *toupée*, which was presented in due form; but, oh! who shall describe this second shock, at finding that it not only did not fit, but that it was so ill-contrived and so little conducive to Bannister's usual *effect* of head, as to be simultaneously pronounced by Mr. and Mrs. Bannister *unwearable*! This was "the most unkindest cut of all!" Poor Bannister was completely upset; but at length Mrs. Bannister reasoned with him upon the inevitable necessity of the case—no virtue like necessity,—and strenuously recommended him to make up his mind at once to a disclosure of his past assumption; at the same time assuring him that his present situation was no

otherwise disadvantageous to his appearance than by rendering him *a little* older ; in short, her sensible arguments finally prevailed over her husband's shyness ; she kindly undertook to break the delicate affair to their children and friends ; and by explaining his previous deception, prepare them for his present change. How "young Bannister" became ultimately reconciled to his privation, was never ascertained ; and the only remarkable public result was to be perceived in the Drury Lane play-bills the following season, wherein he was for the first time announced as "*Mr. Bannister !*" who duly received the congratulations of his theatrical brethren, as well as of his private friends, upon the lucky accident which had revealed one of the most intelligent and benevolent heads ever seen, without lessening the manly beauty of the honestest face in the world.\*

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## DOWTON AND RUSSELL.†

Mr. Russell was the Prince of Oral Hoaxers. His natural voice and expression of face favoured any desire which he conceived, of persuading

\* The foregoing pages, with some of the following, appeared in an anonymous form, in "*Fraser's Magazine*," three years ago, and are now re-published by the kind permission of G. W. Nickisson, Esq.

† Mr. Samuel Russell, the celebrated "*Jerry Sneak*."

his victims, of his own belief of whatever he wished *them* to believe. His calm, dispassionate, and persuasive manners and tones never failed to produce whatever was his object,—no matter upon whom he practised—his end was always attained. Mr. Russell's waggaries were continually in progress in the Green-Room, and he had the skill to adapt them to divers subjects according to his fancy, and with an absolute dominion over himself, he could scarcely fail to rule those upon whom he exercised his power ; his quiet and seemingly *unconscious* mind, the guileless expression of his face and voice, his words and demeanour, were so apparently candid, while carrying on his jokes, and the impassibility of his features so entire, his temper so imperturbable, that these combined characteristics gained him from Mr. Mathews, the fitting *sobriquet* of "*His Innocence*."

Mr. Dowton and Mr. Russell had been brother actors from their earliest years—and malgré their differing temperaments and habits, always fast friends. Never were two people more opposite ; no contraries held more antipathy than the humour of each to the other ; the one all quietness, quirk, and quiddit—the other single-minded and straightforward, quick and combustible ; in effect, an imbodyed firework, ready to crack and split into a thousand little snapping sparks at the slightest touch of the match ; and though its blusterings made every body stand aside for a moment, it soon expended itself

without doing harm to any. Indeed, Mr. Dowton might have reminded one very often of the fabled fountain of antiquity, whose water, it was said, bubbled as if boiling, yet never ran over, but always fell back again, perfectly cool, upon itself.

"*His Innocence*" had a wicked pleasure in troubling the fountain of his friend's natural impatience ;—Dowton was, in fact, an instrument that Russell loved to play upon for the amusement of others—he was acquainted with all his stops from the lowest note to the top of his bent, and was continually sounding his compass even till discord followed, which, however, he knew how to quell with a note of a very different texture ; and as kindling of fires is said to purify the air, so getting *a rouse* out of Dowton, was the sure means of reducing his elemental heat to wholesome temperature—as will appear.

Part of Mr. Russell's system of hoaxing his friend, was by exciting his anger by an invariable calm contradiction of every thing he advanced—however indisputable in itself, and palpable to every other person. Dowton, in his upright simplicity of character, never detected this affectation of contrariety in his friend, but met it with honest rejoinder and an uneven attempt at sustaining his own positions, which only drew upon him a fresh difficulty, and ended in a complete failure—for what could stand firm before the immoveable self-assured manner of his skilful adversary !

Russell, as it seemed, always carried about him—



ready to be produced at the shortest notice—a tangible auxiliary and arbiter in the form and quality of a nicely folded bank-note—which was at the proper moment offered as the ominous prelude to a *Bet*—and Russell's calm—"I'll lay you *five pounds* it *is* (or is *not*) so"—was enough to throw poor Mr. Dowton off his balance, and to allay the bubbling waters of the aforesaid *Asbamea*, and send them back cool and quiet to their native source. It was extraordinary with his general acuteness, how totally unsuspecting Mr. Dowton, remained to his friend's system, of which the following will prove a fair specimen :

Messieurs Mathews, Dowton and Russell, then all three members of Drury Lane Theatre, were travelling together into Kent, in order to perform for the benefit of Mrs. Dowton, at Rochester. At a certain point of the road, Mr. Dowton, who was always particularly interested in all mechanical and rural matters, asked my Husband whether he had ever seen a newly invented windmill, which was remarkable for a *moveable top*?—and if not, told him, he would see one in the course of their journey.

This was a *cue* for the mischief-loving Russell, who, before Mr. Mathews could reply, enquired in his slow and *innocent* tones—"What do you mean Dowton by a windmill with a *moveable top*?

"What do I mean?" *bubbled* Dowton—"why,—why—why I, I, I, mean what I *say*."

"Well my dear fellow," calmly observed Russell,

"I never heard of such a mill, and I go this road as often as *you* do ; I should like to *see* such a mill."

"Well then," said Dowton sharply, "you, you *will* see one, and that very soon—do you think I don't know what I say?"

"Yes! my good friend," drawled Russell, with an indulgent smile, "but you may be *mistaken*, you know, as well as another man ; or you may have been *imposed* upon."

Here Dowton, with a rapid contortion of his muscles, *calmed* down the rising flood, and controlled his boiling choler until he could put down by proof, the incredulous and perverse disposition of Russell. In a few minutes, Mr. Dowton cried out to the post-boy to stop, and calling the attention of his two companions to a mill just in sight, began with great temper and perspicuity to explain the principle upon which this novel piece of mechanism acted, together with its advantages over other mills, &c. &c. During this relation, Russell was apparently much interested, and very attentive to all his friend said—but after Mr. Dowton had fully described it, and finished his account, *His Innocence* turned mildly round, and said with a faint smile, as he looked his friend in the face, "My dear Dowton—I conclude you're joking with us all this while—the *top of that mill* doesn't *move*, my good fellow!"

"Not move, not move!" cried Dowton, whose colour as well as choler mounted, and whose sturdy, compact, little body, was very uneasily and inap-

propriately doing duty as *bodkin* to his fellow-travellers (who, were in a manner his *guests*), and might not inaptly be likened to a little copper tea-kettle seated on the shallow hob of a heated stove,—beginning to *simmer* at Russell's cool impudence.—“Not move!—why - why - why, you astonish me—why, God bless my soul—look again—you must be blind.”

“No,” interrupted his meek friend with a face as immovable as he averred the mill to be—“I am *not blind* Dowton, as you know perfectly well—but that top don't *move*, take my word for it, my good fellow!”

“Why, how-how-how *provoking* you are!” uttered Dowton, again bubbling up—I, I *know* it moves—I, I, I, I've been close to the very mill, and examined its construction with the man who built it—I think *that* may convince you—there now, I tell you, it moves at this very minute” (which it did palpably); “doesn't it Mathews?”

Before “Mathews” could reply, the unconvinced friend, observed, “if the head of that mill *moves*, I'll forfeit my *own*.”

“Well then,” proposed Dowton, with lips and frame quivering with suppressed agitation, “let us get out and go close up to it, for you are the most exasperating and obstinate fellow I ever met with—let us get out, I say.”

“No! Dowton;” replied Russell calmly, “I'm

no more *obstinate* than you are, but I *won't* get out, because I can see perfectly well where I am."

At this aggravating pertinacity Dowton almost boiled over, and in a violent heat insisted upon the fact, appealing again to my Husband, who however was not allowed time to reply before Russell's *dernier resort* was promptly drawn forth—the perpetual bank-note,—while he confidently reiterated, for the hundredth time probably, the startling words—" *I'll bet you five pounds it don't move.*"

This oft-used never-failing expedient was the climax to every controversy; and seemed to startle him to whom it was offered out of his own positive convictions. It might be that Dowton,

"By experience rendered sager,  
Dislik'd to back assertions by a wager."

Certain it is, the test invariably seemed to render him nervous, as if doubtful whether he was really right or wrong, and on the present occasion stifled, after a bitter, subdued, murmuring, the subject in dispute,

*"Small showers last long, but sudden storms are short."*

The next day the trio proceeded to town in excellent humour and good fellowship. Mrs. Dowton had an overflowing house, and all "had gone off well." The friends on their way were gaily chatting upon the events of the previous night, when the conversation was broken off by a sudden movement of Russell's, as he loudly called to the postillion to

stop ; and, with more excitement than he was wont to exhibit, and pointing to the object of the previous day's debate, he observed, with an air of triumph, " *Now, Dowton, there 's a mill with a moveable top !*"

" To be sure there is," said Dowton, surprised ; " I *know* there is ; I told you so yesterday, but you wouldn't *believe* me !"

" Oh dear, No !" said *His Innocence*, in a slow and mild tone of polite denial ; " *No, Dowton, you know you said there were no mills with moveable tops, when I asserted there were !*"

" Why-why-why-why !" exclaimed the astonished and once more agitated Dowton ; " Why ! have you the impudence to-to-to tell me so ; why-why-why—I was the person who first spoke of them ; was-was-wasn't I, Mathews ?"

" My dear fellow," interposed the saint-like Russell, in a soft tone of remonstrance, " there 's no occasion to be in a *passion*, you know ; but if you take time to recollect yourself, you will acknowledge that it was *I* who introduced the subject, and *you* refused to be convinced."

" Why, bless my soul ! why-why-why, you 're enough to drive a man mad," cried poor Dowton, now at boiling heat, adding, " you'll swear away my life some day ! why-why, I, I, I, *I* wanted you to get out of the chaise—didn't I Mathews ?—to see the mill move ; an-an-an-and told you that I had witnessed its motions before, an-an-and you refused to get out."

“I!!!” exclaimed the wronged Russell; “*Oh, No! Pardon me, Dowton, pardon me, it’s a matter not worth our quarrelling about, but it was you, you know, who refused to get out to look at it—I told you I had seen it often, in company with the builder, and knew exactly how it was constructed.*”

Here Dowton’s exasperation was at its height, and he vehemently denied what Russell patiently persisted was the fact; again he denied, and again Russell asserted that *his* was the true version, and drawing forth the everlasting bank-note, ending his reiterated asseverations with the usual flimsy argument of—“*I’ll bet you five pounds!*”

Here Dowton declared he would travel no longer with such an exasperating companion, exclaiming “Let me out, let me out, Mathews, or-or-or I shall commit murder upon the fellow; let me out, I say; I’ll *walk* to town;”—and then he struggled to open the chaise door, but my Husband, who was inwardly convulsed with amusement, restrained his justly-irritated friend, reminding him that he could not reach London in time for his appearance at Drury Lane that evening, if he walked; and, at length, this argument allayed the fervour of Dowton’s determination, and the three friends performed the remainder of the journey in silence; but it was

“Silence that speaks—and eloquence of eyes.”

In short there was no assertion, however preposterous, that the specious Russell could urge, that

his unsuspecting friend would not eventually yield to.

One morning at rehearsal, "*His Innocence*" (*casually, of course*) remarked, as Mr. Mathews left the room (who was, at this period of his life, the thinnest of human beings, and far from possessing even tolerable health), that "it was hardly to be credited, while looking at his slight form, what extraordinary muscular strength he possessed."

"What-what-what, *Mathews!*" cried Dowton—for whom the snare was laid) startled by so transparent a fallacy, "why-why, he's a poor *weak creature!*—what can you mean by *strength?*—why, I'd undertake to knock him down with my little finger." (Mr. Dowton piqued himself upon his *really* muscular frame.)

"Don't you be too sure of *that*," said Russell, coldly; "have you ever *tried?*"

"No," said Dowton; "but I can venture to say that he has not the least muscular power—a poor, consumptive young man; poor fellow, without an atom of sinew or muscle in his whole composition."

"Well!" mildly, yet reprovingly, drawled Russell, "but you *shouldn't* speak, Dowton, without *proof*—now I have seen Mathews perform the most marvellous feats of strength, and therefore I know what he *can* do. Why, D'Egville (of course, D'Egville was promptly confederate in this trick), muscular and Herculean as is his frame, *he* would find Mathews more than his match, if they came to the test."

"Oh, nonsense and stuff!" said Dowton, impatient at the manifest folly of Russell's assertion; "don't make a fool of yourself;" and D'Egville, affecting also to laugh at the idea of his being overcome by Mathews in a trial of strength, Russell coolly expressed his convictions that "Mathews, in wrestling, would conquer D'Egville," and declared he would back his opinion with *a five pound note*; and just as he took it from his pocket, Mr. Mathews, (*quite unconscious, of course*, of what had been going on), returned. The sight of his spare figure seemed to stimulate Dowton's courage and opposition, and he hastily dived into his pocket, saying—"Well, for *once*, I-I-I-I *will* lay a wager, and get that-that-that eternal five pound note from you, for you deserve to be punished for your obstinacy; so, here, Barrymore, do *you*, do *you* hold the stakes." Hereupon, Russell calmly and confidently placed his note in Mr. Barrymore's hand, and Dowton began to count from his purse a similar sum; but as he was about to place the coin with the umpire, his metal was shaken at the tranquil and assured air of Russell, and he drew back his cash, declaring that he would not indulge Russell in the love of betting on every occasion—and recanted; at the same time repeating his conviction that "he should be *robbing* the foolish fellow of his money if he betted upon such an absurdity."

Mr. Mathews having however cheerfully consented to this proof of his superior strength, wrestled with



D'Egville, who acted his part so well, that he frequently fell under his antagonist's *extraordinary* bodily power, and in fact, was so *worsted* in the struggle that he admitted with much apparent mortification, that *he had no chance with him*. At the same time, Dowton, pale with amazement, declared he would not have credited the fact had he not witnessed it, and ever after, while he could not withhold his wonder that a man of such *apparently* weak frame, could be capable of such vigorous energy, Mathews was ranked amongst the *Athletæ* by his brother comedian.

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FAWCETT.

IN the foregoing account of the friendly Trio, it has been mentioned, that Messrs. Dowton, Mathews, and Russell performed at Rochester for Mrs. Dowton's benefit, who was the favourite daughter of the then well-known Mrs. Baker, of eccentric notoriety in her theatrical circuit. Mrs. Baker was a potentate of great authority, and at one time supposed to be extremely wealthy. She had very respectable dwelling houses attached to several of her theatres, and lived in good repute at Rochester, Maidstone, Canterbury, &c.

This lady-manager never allowed but one pay-place for box, pit and gallery—and but one cash-taker, namely, herself; and at the receipt of customs

she was to be found, trusting no hand but her own to touch a shilling—(not a bad hint to greater lessees, and more *losing* speculators).—This manageress, albeit she never acted, was always active, and to be seen in *propria persona*, from the opening to the closing of the doors at her station, where no *money was returned*, even when below the stated price of general admission; and often at the lag-end of an evening's performance, the little vagabonds who hovered about the entrance—children of tender age—would sometimes tender threepence, sometimes fourpence, to be admitted to the closing-scenes of the entertainments, which small remuneration, the lady, provided she was in good humour, would graciously accept. Nay, not infrequently would she deign to smile upon other proffers than the current coin, from these little stage-bitten vagrants—such as a pen-knife, a pair of scissors, a nut-cracker, or any such tangible and useful article. By this system she became a sort of unlicensed pawn-broker; for such valuables were generally deposited for seats in the gallery, redeemable—however *sans intérêt*—at their earliest convenience. A pet dove was once seen offered by a little girl anxious for admission to the gallery on any usurious terms and was accepted, on the understanding that the bird was to be redeemed the next morning *before its breakfast-time* at *pit-price*.

Mrs. Baker had the reputation of being ex-

ceedingly coarse and vulgar ; and certainly proved herself so in her language occasionally, when thrown off her guard by any vexatious surprise or sudden anger. As a proof of this, she was in the habit, when displeased or offended by any performer, of applying to the offender, the elegant and euphonious *sobriquet* of *bugaboo* ! (“You *bugaboo*!”) a word not to be found in any polite vocabulary, but which—to be somewhat etymological—possibly took its rise from *bug-bear*—*n’importe*. The lady, however, certainly could, when she wished to do so, assume an air and tone of good manners, and was moreover very hospitable to her “*stars*,” when they shone upon her,—the London luminaries, from whom her little hemisphere occasionally derived a borrowed light ; and did the honours of her table with grace. But her sister, Miss “*Molly Wakelin*” as she was familiarly though not *endearingly* called—Oh ! she was indeed an awful individual ! but mere coarseness and vulgarity, divested of *humour*, are unworthy of record.

It was in Mrs. Baker’s *troope*, that Mr. Fawcett made an early dramatic *entrée*, and like “Irish” Johnstone, his first ambition was for vocal fame.\*

\* Mr. Johnstone first appeared in London as young Meadows, in “*Love in a village*,” and continued, successfully, the hero of opera for some time after—but it need not be added, that he made a more lasting impression by his fascinating representations of the humour, high and low, of his own country, to which he turned his after attention entirely.

In fact, young Fawcett in his earliest dramatic career, felt no desire to *amuse others*, but amused himself *only*, as a sentimental singer, though *un*-like Johnstone, he did not bring his operatic first-love with him to London, having, fortunately for the public, previously united himself, indissolubly as happily, to *Comedy*, and converted his vocal *sentiment* into the most perfect burletta whimsicality.

In accordance, however with his original and more *serious* views of his own powers, he made his appearance under Mrs. Baker's management, in the character of *Captain Belville* in "*Rosina*." The trial-part for which he had stipulated, on *several counts*.

In the first place, Mr. Fawcett was provided with a very buckish pair of leather *tights*—of the stringent make and fit of that day, and which, according to prescribed fashion, reached nearly to the calf of his *then* calf-less leg, as if with the courteous intention of joining issue with a pair of captivating *top*-boots—that also evidently, though unsuccessfully, yearned to meet the cordial advances of the kindred *leathers*, from which depended many supernumerary strings, in bootless redundancy, tickling at once the fancy and the ankles of the wearer.\* Besides these valuable accessories, the

\* This anecdote was communicated to me by Mr. Fawcett himself—who added that in the dress described he generally went to *balls* and parties, and always in a *sedan chair*' an evi-

youthful Fawcett prided himself exceedingly upon his execution of a shooting-song, belonging to the character he had chosen ; for the perfecting of which, he had occupied the time of Mrs. Baker's whole band, (*three*) to repeat at rehearsal four or five times, so anxious was he to be correct and effective in it ; directing pauses for cadences, and making due arrangements for the (*certain*) *encore*, for he was in reality too practised a sportsman to fear that he should not hit his mark in *Belville*, or fail to bring down, at his first shot at the Rochester audience, the applause at which he aimed.

Mrs. Baker had, during the morning, been too much occupied at her usual station, in letting boxes, and selling tickets, &c., to be present at the rehearsal of the noviciate, but anxious about the young vocalist's success, whom she had engaged in place of a departed favourite, whom the *operas*—in those days the great feature (after “deep tragedy”) in country towns—severely missed—and at the proper period, she placed herself at the gap of the pit entrance, where she could conveniently see and hear the new performer, and at the same time keep a careful eye upon her money-taking post, in case late candidates for admission,

dence of pure dandyism or *buck-ishness*, in that day, which may remind the reader of Mr. Colman's song in “*Inle and Yarico*” written about the same period :

“ A clerk I was in London gay,  
And went in *boots* to see the play.”

or haply any of her juvenile customers, required attention.

At the appointed moment, behold the young soldier-sportsman booted and *spurred*, his hair lavishly pomatumed and powdered, hanging long at his ears (*spaniel* fashion), the hinder portion of it tied into a formidable "*club*" (large enough to knock any body down), and nourished by the usual thick layer of powder on the coat-back. He presented himself with a sufficiency of confidence, whip in hand, and being very good looking, was well received by the Rochester *public*. And when Captain Belville is supposed to see the gamekeeper leading the dogs round to the field, and professes himself "fired by the sight," he gave the audience a taste of his vocal ability in the *then* celebrated song—"By dawn to the downs we repair," which is descriptive of a day's shooting. Fawcett being himself in reality a keen lover of the sport, was so exhilarated by the theme, and so eager to make his audience (essentially *nautical* at that period, and little practised in firing any but *great guns*, and probably uninterested in rural pursuits, unless indeed *ploughing the main* might have given some of them a partial taste for field exercise) partakers of his ardour. His first start was startling enough, for though at score it was by no means in time ; he was in fact so primed and loaded for conquest, and in such a hurry to go off, that he shot at his mark like an arrow, so that the bows in the orchestra had no chance of keeping up

with him, and he was soon a head of the leader whom he completely distanced in a few minutes, leaping over the bars in a most surprising manner ; but the sportsman-singer happily coming to a point at which he naturally paused, he was overtaken in the air by the trio whom he had so hurriedly left behind him, and they then all four jogged on together pretty well until the Captain came to the last portion of his song, when he gives instruction to his attendant gamekeeper, to "*Fire away!*" at the game in view ; at which crisis Fawcett now charged to the muzzle with enthusiasm, went off again like a shot, and was carried so far by the impetus of his feelings and natural love of the sport he described, together with his scenic zeal, that he lost all recollection of time and distance and long after the fiddlers had performed their prescribed task, and had reached the word *finis* in their books, "*Captain Belville*" continued the chase, unaccompanied by his three companions, and was heard reiterating *ad libitum*, the closing bars of his song, and vociferating his sportsman-like order beyond all license, until the actor at his side, joined the audience in a convulsion of laughter,—an effect not lessened when the well-known voice of Mrs. Baker, issuing from the gap of the pit entrance, in a transport of ungovernable anger and vexation, cried out loud enough for every body in the house to hear—

" Go off ! go off you *bugaboo* ! go off I say ! do you mean to stand "*firing away*" there all night !"

## QUICK AND HIS SPOILED CHILD.

"Oh, Jephthah, judge of Israel, what a treasure had'st thou!"

MR. QUICK ("Little Quick") had also a "treasure," namely, "*one fair daughter, the which he loved passing well,*"—too well! It followed, then, that she was in infancy so humoured, petted, and "spoiled," that in comparison with her wild and whimsical desires the famed requisition of the "top tile off the chimney" was a moderate and justifiable demand.

One day, a friend "dropping in" upon Mr. and Mrs. Quick at their dinner-hour, found these fond parents and their "treasure" already seated at table, although the dishes were yet covered. The hospitable couple insisted on their friend's participation of their homely meal; and he, in compliance with their wish, took the fourth side of the board, immediately opposite to the young *mistress of the house* (then about six years of age), who, by right of custom and her own sovereign will, chose, day by day, whatever position caprice, or local speculations, connected with certain edibles, pointed out to be most desirable; and there the high chair of the little despot was ordered to be placed. On the present occasion, having forestalled her dinner by



eating a lump of cake, which had palled her appetite, and rendered the present meal an unwelcome superfluity, the *little dear* was seated next to her doting father, as a mere looker on.

The main dish upon the table, when uncovered, excited the curiosity of Miss Quick, who either had not seen the joint before, or had forgotten the name of it, which she now eagerly demanded ; and upon being told that it was *a saddle of mutton*, she stood up, and promptly announced her intention to ride upon it forthwith. To this preposterous recreation the parents were fain to entreat the little imp's forbearance. In vain ; for she declared saddles were made to ride upon, and to ride she was resolved. After much ado, her patient father and mother luckily suggested that the obvious heat of the seat she aspired to, and the inconvenience likely to arise from such exercise would distress her, and moreover spoil her new frock, the difficulty seemed surmounted, and the child desisted from further importunity ; but immediately after, perceiving the dish almost overflowing with the juice of the mutton, she cried out, "Oh, let me put my foot in the gravy ! I *will* put my feet in the *gravy* !" The father, albeit not unused to such eccentric fancies, was a *little* startled at his *sweet pet's* novel desire, and exclaimed in a tone of assumed wonder and of deprecation, " My *precious love* ! what a preposterous thing you propose ! it's quite out of the question. Now *be a dear, good* child, and let me help Mr.

—— to some mutton." "Oh!" reiterated the little *treasure*, "I *will* put my feet in the gravy *first*!" In vain the devoted parents argued, threatened, and coaxed; in vain promised that the *next* day, when they were without a visitor, she should do whatever she pleased; all, all in vain! for, upon a more determined opposition, the *sweet little angel* yelled out her wishes in such a piercing key, that her mother, a very mild-mannered person, addressed her husband, "My dear Mr. Quick, I'm afraid we shall have *no* peace until we allow the dear child to do as she likes." "Well, but my love," urged Mr. Quick, in reply, a little ashamed of their mutual weakness before their guest, "what will Mr. —— say to such a proceeding? It is really so *improper*." Mr. —— willing to see to what extreme, parental folly could go, withheld both his opinion and permission, preferring a state of neutrality; and Mr. Quick, finding the little tyrant's determination warmer every minute, and the mutton cooler, proposed a compromise, namely, that the *little darling* should have another dish brought in, and placed in a corner of the room with some of the gravy in it, and then paddle about whilst themselves and friend were at dinner, and return to table when the fruit came in. No; the "*treasure*," at the very top of her voice, once more declared that she *would* have the *dish*, and nothing *but* the dish before her; and, further, that she would not abate one drop of the gravy. At this perplex-

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ing juncture, Quick turned towards his friend, in apology for the scene before him, assuring him at the same time, that "it was of no use to thwart the dear child, who *would* have her way." Then calling for another dish, the poor father placed the shivering saddle upon it, and lifting that from the table containing the gravy, carried it to a remote corner of the room, where he was followed by the "*little duck*;" who, after a persuading kiss from the goose her father, consented to have her shoes removed, and to remain splashing about until the dessert appeared upon the table. When the little nuisance graciously allowed her foot-bath to be taken away, she re-ascended her high chair, and there further shewed how hateful lovely infancy may become from improper indulgence, by pushing about and knocking down whatever was offered that she did not approve. Screaming forth her preference, she at length declared in favour of a large pear, *the largest in the dish*, upon which she had placed her affections. Mrs. Quick, unwilling to incur by fresh denial another contest with her powerful superior, with prompt kindness smilingly placed the coveted pear upon her daughter's plate; when, to the alarm of the beholders, the little fury threw it back upon her mother with all the ferocity of a full-grown termagant, exclaiming, as she did so, "*Why* did you *give* it to me? I wanted to *snatch* it!"

Mr. Quick himself related this story to me,

at the same time congratulating himself that his child had grown into a sensible rational woman, notwithstanding her parents' early endeavours to make her a fool.

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## HOLLAND AND KEMBLE.

“One gives another a cup of poison, but at the same time tells him it is a cordial, and so he drinks it off and dies.”—SOUTH.

MR. CHARLES HOLLAND was always a very *anxious* actor, and when very young, and before he had gained the least confidence in himself upon the stage, he happened to be performing at Liverpool, during a time when John Kemble was engaged there as a star. Mr. Holland having, on one of the nights of the great man's appearance, to perform Horatio, in *Hamlet*, with him, felt more than usually nervous and fearful, indeed, he was, beyond description, tremulous and agitated. He, however, got on pretty well through the earlier and least important scenes of the part, but during the latter portion of the play the young actor felt his fears renewed, and his tongue clove to the roof of his mouth with thirst, arising from the feverish anxiety not to commit himself in his last and more responsible scenes with Hamlet. A short time, therefore, before his last scene in the fourth act came on, taking a hint from the redoubtable *Macheath*, he

had recourse to a little false courage, and perceiving a little boy, a hanger-on of the carpenters, at the side scene, he bid him go into the adjoining tavern and get a glass of cold brandy-and-water, at the same time charging the lad to "set the better foot before," and make diligent speed. Away, in nimble haste, scampered the little messenger, and quicker than Ariel, he did his "spiriting," for he returned in less time than the sender had believed possible, and presented a huge tumbler, filled to the brim, to Mr. Holland, who was just then "called" to go upon the stage. The actor eagerly seized the compound, drinking it to the very dregs, *literally*—for arriving at the bottom of the glass he observed a dark red sediment clinging to it, and exclaiming against the dirty compounder of the draught, told the boy to carry back the glass to the tavern, and ask what filthy stuff had been mixed with the brandy-and-water.

At this instant, Horatio's cue being given, Mr. Holland went upon the stage, from which, shortly after, his attention was withdrawn by the apparition of the landlady of the hotel—whose figure he knew—standing at the "wing," with several of the performers, who seemed listening with consternation to something she was telling them as she wrung her hands and wept bitterly,—from time to time looking anxiously towards the stage, and beckoning to Mr. Holland as if, in imitation of Denmark's ghost, she "some impartment did desire to him alone!"

He was surprised, but of course could not attend to her, although again and again did she wave him "to a more removed ground." At length the scene ended, and Mr. Holland's "fate cried out" in very audible accents—"what's the matter my good woman?" At this address the sorrowing woman's tears fell faster and faster, and with hands and eyes uplifted in supplication, she, by piecemeal, thus "unpacked her heart with words."

"Oh! Sir! oh dear Sir! Pray forgive me!—I didn't go to do it,—indeed I didn't. Oh pray, pray, say you forgive me for what I've done!"

"Well," replied the actor, in his softest tones, "what have you done? and what have I to forgive?"

"Oh, Sir! oh Mr. Holland!—you may forgive me, but I shall never forgive myself to my dying day!" declared the conscientious landlady.

"But what?" asked Mr. Holland impatiently—"What is your dying-day to me, Ma'am?—What is it you mean?"

"Oh! Sir—promise me that when I tell you, you will forgive me!"

"Well, well," replied Holland—"I do promise—only make haste, and tell me what I'm to forgive."

"Well then, Sir," sobbed the afflicted woman—"you sent to our bar for a glass of brandy-and-water."

"I know I did," exclaimed the actor, still more impatient with the person, who thus "played the tor-

turer by small and small," "of *course* I *know* I sent for brandy-and-water."

"And you *drank* it, Sir?"

"Why to be *sure* I did,"—peevishly added Holland.

"Ah Sir! oh Sir! oh Mr. Holland, *you are a dead man, Sir*; you hav'nt an hour to live; you're *poisoned* Sir!"

"What!—Bless my soul!" cried Holland, pale as his shirt, and naturally ruffled by this dreadful intelligence—" *Poisoned*?"

"Oh yes Sir, you are *indeed*!—But I didn't know what I had done, till you sent back the tumbler. Oh Sir! *red arsenic*;—kept to poison our own rats, not *you* Sir! didn't see what glass I took off the shelf—your boy was in *such* a hurry!—only one candle in the bar,—didn't notice that any thing was in it—oh that unlucky tumbler!"

Poor Mr. Holland had like to have been a *tumbler* also at this minute for a visible faintness came over him from fright, and which he naturally enough, mistook for the first throe of the poison, which he believed had assumed the *right of search* throughout his interior; (indeed it was not improbable that the brandy was *contrebande*) and staggering with agitation and horror against the wall, he gave vent to his feelings in a burst of tears, exclaiming in the words of his friend Hamlet:—

"Oh thou most pernicious woman!"

“ Oh ! ” soliloquised the wretched landlady—  
“ what *shall* I do ? what *shall* I do ? ”

“ What shall *I* do ? you mean ; ” exclaimed the agonized man in despair, and whose words, and expressions were now amusingly contrasted with his naturally impassive air, and calm manner of speaking ; and, turning to the by-standers who looked stupified, he asked—“ Will no one send for a doctor ?—don’t you hear that I’m *poisoned* ? ”

Indeed every body seemed aghast, and paralyzed at this but half-understood calamity ; but they now assisted Mr. Holland to a chair, for he felt his sufferings of mind increase every moment—and the miserable cause of them was sent away to summon medical aid. In the mean time the curtain was about to draw up for the Fifth Act, and Mr. Kemble appearing at the wing, and seeing Mr. Holland talking in his very soft toned voice to those near him and apparently forgetful of his approaching duty, addressed a reminder to him, that the act was begun, and that they would soon hear their cue to go on the stage.

The truth is, Mr. Holland, though suffering intense distress of mind, and anticipating the momentary approach of still greater suffering,—was not yet assailed by the consequences of the fatal draught beyond a slight burning sensation, which a glass of strong brandy-and-water might in itself occasion ; and though dreadfully affected by his situation, he



did not yet exhibit any acute symptoms of bodily ail—but he looked wild and *distract*, and Mr. Kemble, who had retired to his dressing-room, after his last exit, to recruit his strength by rest, was totally ignorant of the disaster that had befallen the young actor—and catching the words “brandy-and-water,” and observing the altered and pallid looks, and uncertain deportment of Mr. Holland, he became somewhat suspicious, that his friend *Horatio* had taken a drop too much and that “the drink” had stolen away his brains—little dreaming that the poisoned cup of scenic royalty had been anticipated. But as the cue for their mutual entrance was about to be given by the *Grave-digger*, and perceiving that Mr. Holland made no effort to move forward,—Mr. Kemble jogged his elbow saying in his quiet manner :

“Come, Mr. Holland, our cue will be given in a few minutes.”

“My dear Sir,” replied Holland, faintly, “I’ve nothing more to do with cues,” and, raising his handkerchief to his eyes, added, pathetically, “I shall never go upon the stage again, Sir ; it’s all over with me !”

“*Nonsense!*” cried Kemble, still more assured that the

“Oracle of Apollo spoke out of the pottle ;”

“Nonsense, Sir, you *must* go on *immediately*.”

“My dear Sir,” replied Holland, with his natu-

rally calm accents unaltered, "you see before you a *dead man*!"

"Pooh! pooh!" said Kemble, with an incredulous smile, believing that the *dead man* had imbibed plentifully of the "*liquor of life*."

"I *assure* you, Mr. Kemble, it's too true—don't you know that I've taken poison?"

"*Poison in jest*!" muttered Kemble, playfully.

"No," cried Holland, piteously, "in *earnest*, Mr. Kemble."

"Well, well," observed the tragedian (patting him on the back, and who could not, under his impression, treat the matter with any seriousness,) "*never mind*, my good fellow, you can play the rest of your part, I dare say, if you *are* poisoned!"

"It's impossible, Sir!" cried Mr. Holland; "would you wish to force a *dying man* upon the stage, and exhibit his last moments to the audience?"

"Well, but my good friend!" pursued Kemble, coldly, "how is the play to end unless you *do* appear?—the *tragedy can't finish without you*!"

"It will finish *with* me, Mr. Kemble!" exclaimed the unhappy man. "Surely, you would not be so *unkind* as to force me on?—why," he urged, "I am at this moment in the *agonies of death*!"

"Well, if you *are*," replied Mr. Kemble, with perfect *sang froid*, "you can manage to go through the rest of your part. It will be soon over, my good fellow, and then you can do as you please;" and the

cue being now given, he seized the dying man by the arm and dragged him upon the stage, where, certainly *more dead* than *alive*, poor Mr. Holland awaited his mortal agonies, and it may be well imagined that, under the sad expectation of a premature termination of his life, the scene ensuing, which disclosed a new-made grave gaping open before him, was not likely to be very agreeable or cheering to a man tottering upon the brink of his *own*; neither was Hamlet's philosophical speculations upon the *sculls*, and the suggestion of their own being knocked about in a similar manner, very *comforting*, and poor Mr. Holland's heart, as well as Hamlet's *head*, *ached* at the thought!—indeed, considering Mr. Holland's approaching dissolution, the author's allusions were most harrowingly painful.

The awful scene ended, Horatio, during his short exit from the stage, was questioned eagerly by his theatrical brethren,—who were impatiently waiting at the wing,—as to his *symptoms*, but before he could satisfy their anxious enquiries, Mr. Kemble pulled him on the stage again to the scene with *Osric*, previously to whose entrance, it will be remembered that Hamlet makes several pointed allusions to *sudden death*, and which, it may be supposed, caused the *dead man* at his side to flinch and quail; nor did he feel much less when the *Stoup* of wine (a vessel, by the way, formed very much after the fashion of a *goblet*) was presented to the Queen, and whose dying exclamation of—

“The **DRINK**—the *drink* ! *I'm poisoned* !”

penetrated into his inmost heart, and drew the tenderest tears of sympathy from his eyes. In truth, *Horatio* nearly fainted at this counterfeit presentment of his own approaching fate ! But lo ! behold, at this critical and awful moment, the rat-destroying hostess again at the wing !—again clasping her chubby hands, and once more beckoning Mr. Holland from the stage, but with her tears dried up, and a smiling, nay, joyful expression of face. *Horatio* could scarcely find patience to stay by his expiring friend, *Hamlet*, till all was over with him, or listen with decent attention to the vital intelligence that—

“The potent poison quite o’ercrowd his spirit ;”

but as soon as the breath was out of his friend’s body, the anxious *Horatio*, leaving the funeral obsequies of the Danish prince to the discretion of his obsequious attendants, rushed off the stage, and demanded of the lady in waiting the cause of her altered appearance.

“ Oh, sir ! oh, *dear* Sir ! I ’m so happy ! You ’re *not* poisoned, Sir ; it ’s all a *mistake* ! Oh, dear ; oh, dear ; *you can’t think* how happy I am !”

“ Yes, I *can*,” replied Holland, *feelingly* ; “ but how do you know that I’m *not* poisoned ! Are you *sure* I am not ?”

The joyful woman deposed to the following. It appeared that after she left the theatre, in order to

send for a doctor to the murdered man, she communicated to her husband—who had just returned home after a short absence—the sad mishap, explaining to him how she had, in her haste to supply the mixture without delay, heedlessly used the glass in which the arsenic for the rats was kept upon the shelf, and sent it with the brandy-and-water to Mr. Holland. The husband, at the mention of the arsenic, cast his eyes, involuntarily, up to the spot where the deadly potion usually stood, and starting forward, took from its place the identical tumbler, still charged with the red fluid, and held it before the eyes of his astonished wife;—"Why, then," cried she, "I did *not* use that glass after all! Thank Heaven!—but where then did that come from which I *did* use?" This was an anxious mystery still. However, the good woman, much relieved, flew into the theatre again, and acquainted every body with her husband's happy discovery. Still the other tumbler and its red sediment was to be accounted for—nor was this long unexplained.

The little errand-boy was called forward and questioned by the manager and the performers, and they at length elicited from him that when Mr. Holland gave him his hurried order to run for the brandy-and-water, he snatched, as he passed, a tumbler from the shelf of the Property-Room, without looking whether it was clean, or noticing anything in it. This glass, the Property-man explained, had had some *rose-pink*, prepared in it the evening

before, for sanguinary purposes, and it, in fact, retained the *surplus* — the residuary drops from Banquo's

“Twenty trenched gashes in his head,”

which afterwards concreted, and was set apart ready, again to be made soluble for the next dead-doing deed, which might call for such gory evidence of its consummation.

The young actor's fears thus “quietly inurned,” he withdrew to his dressing-room, praying Heaven for temperance, at the same time doubting whether the poet was right in saying, as he had, that—

*“Spirits are not touched, but to fine issues.”*

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MUNDEN.

(ANOTHER CASE OF POISONING.)

MR. MUNDEN was a *great* actor—and unlike the generality of “*low comedians*,” (that is, the representatives of broad comedy and farce,) was really *fond* of acting; a rare instance in that line of the drama. Liston, Mathews, and many others, after their early *furor* subsided, became reluctant and dejected promoters of the public mirth.

Mr. Munden, however, unlike these, was an actor

*per se*, and might be said to have "heart and soul" in his vocation; although it was believed that for many years past *Mammon led him on*; still it is certain, independent of any other guide than his own fancy, he followed his art *con amore*.

Every play-goer of his time must have seen Mr. Munden perform Obadiah, in the "Committee" or "Honest Thieves," (if not, they are now to be pitied) — and who of those has not a recollection also of the incomparable Johnstone, ("Irish Johnstone") in "*Teague*," picturesquely draped in his blanket, and pouring forth his exquisite humour and mellifluous brogue, in equal measure?

One night in that particular scene, wherein Teague plies the old hypocrite Obadiah with wine, when it is customary to use a black quart bottle, and to pour from its neck the contents down the throat of the actor, in spite of his repeated resistance and declaration of "No more, Mr. Teague." On this night Mr. Munden's struggles against the re-administration of the doses were found to be unusually vigorous, and therefore more exciting to the administrator. Nevertheless, Obadiah gulped the liquid down at each application of it, under which operation his contortions of face were so extremely grotesque and so irresistibly comical, that even Johnstone while he forced upon him the contents of the bottle to the last drop, was convulsed at his brother comedian's extra-drollery, and the audience absolutely screamed with laughter. At length, the scene

ended, Obadiah was borne off the stage in the usual state of non-resistance allied to wine-deadened faculties. But the moment Mr. Munden found himself out of sight and hearing of the audience, he sprang upon his legs, and broke out into the most passionate exclamations of disgust and anger—crying out to the astonishment of every body—with the addition of certain expletives which may not be repeated—

“——I’m a dead man ! send for a stomach pump ! It’s all over with me ! If I die, I’ll hang the rascal that did it !—*I’m poisoned !* Murder ! murder !—I’m destroyed !—where’s the villain that filled that bottle ?—I’ll hang him !—Oh ! I’m a dead man ! &c. &c.” During these and similar ravings he tried to clear his palate from the flavour of the “leprous distilment” to which he alluded—but in vain, and he continued to stamp and rave—half in anger, half in suffering, till at last, pressed by all around him for some solution of the mystery, he cried out in an agony of disgust, pointing to the empty bottle still in Johnstone’s hand,—“*Lamp oil, Lamp oil—every drop of it !*”

The poor functionary of the “*Property-Room*,” had, indeed, in his haste to deliver this “*Property*,” mistaken a similar looking bottle, which was half-filled with the rankest lamp oil, for the *demi-bouteille* prepared for the scene in which sherry and water was usually employed, to drench the unlucky actor !

The poor fellow was “*very* sorry for his mistake,”



but what was his sorrow to Mr. Munden's sufferings? what atonement to a "dead man" who was determined upon seeing his "murderer" hanged as soon as *all was over* with himself? Again Munden stamped and swore he "*must* die," and indeed, at length staggered exhausted into the green-room, and threw himself upon the sofa, heart-sick and overcome with faintness. It must really have been a draught that only a Russian boor could have forgiven, and poor Mr. Munden was piteously affected with the nauseous flavour which *would* be remembered spite of any other liquid, with which his friends endeavoured to stifle the recollection.

When the sufferer had in some degree recovered from the nausea the accident caused, Mr. Johnstone marvelled why Munden should have *allowed* him, after his first taste, to pour the whole of the disgusting liquid down his throat. "It would," Johnstone said, "have been easy to have rejected, or opposed a repetition of it, by hinting the mistake to him." Mr. Munden's reply—by gasps—was as follows—

"My dear boy,—I was about to do so,—but there was such a glorious *roar* at the first face I made upon swallowing it, that I hadn't the heart to spoil the scene, by interrupting the effect, though I thought I should die every time you poured the accursed stuff down my throat

'A Roman, with a Roman-heart, can suffer!'

This was truly the "ruling passion, strong in death."

Yield, ye Romans, yield, ye Greeks! Here was a hero, before whom you must hide your diminished heads!

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## SOWERBY.

MR. SOWERBY was a very eccentric person, and by some people considered in the light of

"A brain-struck man  
Of wond'rous parts, but wild enthusiasm."

He was, no doubt, possessed of genius for the art in which he yearned to excel. But nature had refused to favour his face and figure for the personations of the poetic drama—he could neither look nor move the hero of tragedy—his features were incapable of any other than a harsh and scornful expression—his limbs short and ungraceful—his voice unmusical and monotonous, and his action very often grotesque—yet had he a cultivated mind and a correct understanding of his text—and might have made a successful actor in a certain line, had he exhibited fewer eccentricities of person and manner. Notwithstanding these defects, he made his débüt suc-

cessfully in a new drama, at the Haymarket, and sustained his position in it during the run of the piece. Many have been the amusing relations rife about Mr. Sowerby (who sometimes practised in the provinces, under the name of *Seaton*) both on and off the stage, some of which, I believe, have been in print, but I'm not aware that the following have appeared.

Performing *Othello* one evening in Manchester, his *outré* style and ungraciating manners, not hitting the taste of that audience (lauded by most London actors as one of the most judicious out of the metropolis), disapprobation was expressed in the usual manner—and was received by Sowerby with a marked though silent contempt, evinced by a low bow. After which, deliberately seating himself in a large velvet-chair, which happened to be upon the stage, with a scornful smile at his reprovers, he appeared as if patiently awaiting the termination of their displeasure. His meaning was sufficiently palpable “to the meanest capacity” and as a “British audience” can ill bear the retort its severity and occasional *injustice* sometimes provokes, the condemned actor's mode of receiving their hisses was repaid by *off, off!* from all parts of the house—which, continuing for some minutes, gave the sedentary offender pause to think, and feeling his incapability of making himself heard at that moment by any verbal appeal, he at length resorted to action, which, in some cases, is best eloquence.

Rising for a moment, and then reseating himself firmly in the regal looking chair with a determined pressure of his elbows and hands upon its arms, as if quite prepared for the eventualities, he seemed to say to the dominant powers "*your command will not be obeyed—I remain here in spite of you!*" At this intelligible, pantomimic expression, a redoubled cry of "*off, off!*" assailed him—but Sowerby still sat unmoved, either in person or temper by the violence of his clamorous assailants. But suddenly, a tremendous voice broke through the popular tumult, and bellowed forth a scornful "*No!*"—and a dead silence ensued—which Sowerby also broke through with a second "*No!*" adding, "you shall never have the gratification of saying that you *drove* me from your stage!—when I go, I will be *carried* off!" At which novel address the recent feeling of anger was converted into a burst of general amusement, and the more liberal portion of the audience favoured the actor with several rounds of applause at this effusion of personal independence, and cries of "*go on with your character!*" were audible from several parts of the house, the which were answered by Sowerby in his characteristic way, who, still seated with front erect, upon the velvet chair, thus resumed in his most deliberate and tragic accents—accompanied by appropriate action, and a preliminary reiteration of "*No! no!*"—You have inflicted a *wound* you shall never have the honour to heal—you have *checked* my youthful ardour, blight-

ed my ambition, destroyed my reputation, and in return take—my *execrations!*” then calling to the side scenes—in an imperious and dignified tone—“*Scene-Shifters!*—bear me away from these *people!* I shall now go home and read the story of *the Roman and the Pig!*” and he was borne off the stage by two men,—seated in his chair of state, and, as it seemed,—more like a *conqueror* than a *martyr*—but amidst the laughter and hisses of the spectators, whom he treated, at his exit, with a bitter smile and a disdainful movement of his hand, more *male-* than *valedictory*.

Mr. Sowerby was, almost always, equally unlucky in his dramatic attempts. It was peculiarly hard upon him, as he pursued the art, not for “base lucre”—for he was a man of a sufficient fortune—but *con amore*, and his total failure rendered him, long after, extremely unhappy, and in his disappointment he felt, like *Roderigo*, that he was, in fact, a “very ill-used gentleman.” He idolized the Kemble family, whose peculiar intonations and manner he obviously affected; and in his residence at Bath were to be seen, encompassed by frames of regal splendour,—suspended by golden cords and tassels,—the best engravings of these his honoured models, each portrait surmounted by a graceful wreath of gilded bays.

On Mr. Sowerby’s final retirement from his struggles for dramatic fame and favour, he was able to jest very pleasantly upon his past mortifica-

tions, and in commemoration of his well-known failures, and the general issue (or as a cockney might more aptly pronounce it, the *Hiss-ue*) of his performances, he gave his abode the discriminating title of

*Hist Hall!*

This domiciliary distinction will be found (copied from his own hand), recorded in the following characteristic letter:—

“If thou likest not the produce of my farm, mayest thou never again visit *Hist Hall*.

“WM. SOWERBY,

“21, Devonshire-buildings, Bath.

“To Charles Mathews, Esq.”

Mr. Sowerby was much liked by those who knew him best, and his eccentricities were sources of vast entertainment, especially to actors.

During the period of his London performances alluded to, Mr. Thelwall was delivering Lectures upon Acting and the Drama. On one occasion Mr. Sowerby and Mr. Mathews were present. In the course of his subject, the lecturer, very indelicately and unnecessarily, quoted—in illustration of one of his own positions—the public style of one of his auditors,—of whose presence, it may be inferred, he was totally unconscious,—and whom Mr. Thelwall intemperately distinguished as “*A wretch of the name of Sowerby,*” &c.

This allusion my Husband hoped, and indeed believed, had escaped the ear of his companion, who sat unmoved by it, and the remarks that succeeded. But Mr. Mathews was mistaken, for waiting only till Mr. Thelwall came to a pause at the end of his theme, the eccentric and good-humoured subject of it, walked slowly up close in front of the lecturer, and making him a very low, respectful bow, said, with profound gravity, in a loud voice—"Sir! the '*Wretch*, Sowerby,' has the honor of wishing you a very good morning;" and left the room without the slightest emotion of any kind.

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#### DIGNUM.

" ' Betty, Betty, you're a good girl, but you'll never set the Thames on fire !'

' No, Marm ; I hope I shall never do any thing so wicked !'

WHETHER the above invidious remark of a sapient mistress, and tart rejoinder of her single-minded maid-servant really took place, it matters not to inquire ; the said colloquy being placed before the reader, simply for the purpose of reminding him of a popular observation, apt to be applied disparagingly to some of the most meritorious, praiseworthy members of society, of whom, individually, it is sometimes said,—“ Mr.—— is a very good sort of

man, but *he'll never set the Thames on fire!*" The origin of this dogma we (to assume the *regal* attribute, as more befitting, than the poor *personal pronoun*, the elevated, and withal *grave* character of the present theme)—*we* are by no means curious to learn, being little prone to "old saws," inclining more to modern "instances;" but *we* confess *ourselves* desirous of knowing how the phrase in question can be applied, as it invariably *is*, in the sense of a reproach to a man, that he is by nature or principle unfitted or adverse to the commission of an act, atrocious in itself, and so wide-spreading and calamitous in its consequences! Every body knows, or should know, that incendiarism in the dry matter of a hay-stack is by law accounted rank felony, and rigorously punished accordingly; and if this be viewed as a burning shame in perpetration, how, it may be asked, can an extension of the crime fail to be proportionately flagrant, and conflagrant, in the impartial eyes of *Justice*—which, by the way, is feigned to be blind.—*N'importe*. In the roll of political expediency there exists a canon which has established that the destroyer of *one* man is, not only actually, but penally, a *murderer*, while the slayer of thousands (in the field of battle) is morally and lawfully a hero! By a parity of reasoning—But what have we to do with reason?—let us return to the post from whence we started, and proceed direct to the goal of our intent.

Of the many worthy people, then, who have by



miracle escaped the fell stigma of being capable of firing Father Thames, Dignum, or, as he was familiarly called, *Diggy*, was pre-eminently conspicuous, and of whom it may be affirmed that—take him out of the sound and instigation of an orchestra—he was as innoxious as an unloaded gun, and *deserving* as his name imports. Dignum was, indeed, an incomparable man ; one who unvaryingly pursued his walk of life, from which he never turned to left or right, but trod in the straight line, the very *groove* of his calling, following his nose wherever Mammon led. It may truly be said that his olfactory sense was prodigious ! Diggy could smell out a City feast from the West-end with most miraculous organ. If he had any other sense it was never allowed to assert itself to the disparagement of the prime object before him. Dignum's genius was *not*, in fact, *ubiquitous*, if we may so say. Unlike *a bird*, it was never to be found in more than one place at a time, the road to which led distinctly and direct to his pocket—a perfect *impasse*—where it terminated. Therein were duly deposited golden opinions from all sorts of men,—fresh from the mint of City dinners and civic junketings, where, being by profession a singer, he pursued the tenor of his way, adding to the general harmony of the social board ; for it was well known that Diggy possessed by birthright some eight or ten flimsy notes, which he was always willing to utter in exchange for more tangible coin. These

notes were by fastidious judges apt to be pronounced false ; nevertheless, they passed current with the wise men of the East, the Midasses of the Goldsmith's Company, and many other companies, where " good digestion waits on appetite," though not always " health on both"—many members of which preferred the reed of a *Pan* to the lyre of *Apollo*, and with whom Diggy could always enjoy a good dinner for *an old song*. It must not, however, hence be inferred that Dignum was without the appliances and means of a table of his own. Certes, he had a spit in his kitchen, but then nothing turned upon it ; for although Diggy was a man of a capacious and fair rotundity, which daily " thrived with large increase," he had no stomach for mean cates and sordid home-providings ; and he preferred to dine where he found " a table full of welcome," and " meats sweet savoured to his taste." Of such he could eat any given quantity, and with them " pour large draughts of Rhenish down ;" so that there was not a pore of his skin but what, by a moderate computation, might have been said annually to owe a cooper of claret to every *Company* on the east side of Temple Bar. Other pursuits, however, at other periods, enforced his attention elsewhere. City spits would not serve his turn all the year round. Margate claimed its own in due season. Dignum's banqueting patrons went duly out of town, and their kitchen fires went out at the same time ; and London was left to cool. Before which

period Diggy, "weighing the sum of things with wise forecast," engaged himself at Vauxhall ; and when summer was leafy (and dusty too), he was to be seen in sultry evenings, at a stated hour, emerging from the roseate and festooned orchestra, as large as life itself (and almost as natural too) ; his acre of white waistcoat quaking in laborious undulation, surmounted by his sunflower face, radiant and glowing with heat and vocal zeal, while he imparted in "gutturals that convulsed his throat" the computed merits of that thornless rose, *The Lass of Richmond Hill*, and other charmers of legendary fame (of a race long extinct), whose exquisite peculiarities were set forth in metrical redundancy, and set to music by Mr. James Hook, the local composer, and finally confided to the tender mercies of the cocked-hat-bag-wigged orchestra, and to Diggy and his co-mates, who joined their vocal worship of past excellence to the "choir of creatures wanting voice," for the especial ears and edification of the visitants who took interest in "wood-notes wild," and such amatory lore—the *lookers-up*, the early-to-bed-early-to-rise frequenters of "the garden," who, having duly trodden down the loose pebbles, and otherwise macadamised the gravel-walks with their broad plebeian soles, for the greater comfort of the thin-shod patrician successors of the night, would retire, redolent of the odours of ham and arrack, complacently humming snatches of the airs (the "*toons*") which their attentive ears had happily im-

bibed, to "carry away," and with which, for weeks after to "make vocal every spray" in Tooley Street and the Borough.

A quick transition from summer to winter was easy to him who knew no middle season of spring and fall. As soon, therefore, as Vauxhall Gardens closed their rural gates, Drury Lane Theatre opened wide—*very* wide—its dignified portals to admit Diggy's ample form; for there, time out of mind, he was found the stock representative of the gallant Captain Sightly,—a character which he performed annually to Mrs. Jordan's *Romp* for nearly a quarter of a century, and of which by prescriptive right he retained possession for many a year after the secession of that inimitable actress. Who that had even once seen Dignum in the amatory soldier could forget him? With what a full-blown martial air would he present himself, as lounging about the streets, though morning, in a captain's *full-dress* regimentals of his day! With what *ease and elegance*,\* with what infinite grace, did he amble about the scenic representation of the City, of which his real feelings and person were so essentially a part and parcel! With what an easy slope would Captain Sightly drop in upon Miss La Blonde, the go-between milliner of Cheapside, and sidle into what Americans would call "the dry grocery store" of

\* Under this title Dignum was, some years ago, represented in Gillray's window, by an admirable sketch, which partial friends might have possibly called a caricature.

young Mr. Walter Cockney, the gold-waistcoated East dandy of those times, in order to press the fair hand of his Jamaica heiress, which had previously been "larruping" her black slavey, little *Quashibaw*, worse than any nigger! How judiciously would Diggy, in a subsequent scene, act the part of bottle-holder to the delicate Miss Tomboy, during her pugilistic experiments upon her grocer-cousin!—his warrior-head pomatumed and powdered, resembling a seedling cauliflower, and agreeing in shape, though not in colour, with his well-rounded face; his figure bedight in scarlet coat, with yellow facings; white dimity double-breasted and lapelled waistcoat; red sash, pendant over his white kerseymeres, the ends dangling unequally above his well-mangled silk stockings of a bluish hue; with paste knee and shoe buckles, low-quartered pumps, and eke a very large three-cornered cocked hat, gilt-buttoned and looped, with a towering red-and-white feather swagging over one shoulder,—presenting altogether "a combination and a form, indeed, where every (gallery) god did seem to set his seal to give assurance of"—an officer and a *gentleman*! (*Dignum* was essentially *that*, or, less than that, he was nothing.) With what a gracious bend, upon his first entrance, would he approach the foot-lights, as he acknowledged the emphatic greeting of his two bones in the pit!\*—one hand stretched forward to his lady-love,

\* *Bone* was formerly the name and quality of free admissions, accorded as privileges to actors of a certain salary.

and the other spread, in compliance with his unvarying custom, impressively across his bosom, indicating the seat of his heart. Who shall forget the twinkle of his eye while he oozed forth his tender suit, which he warbled in song? How Pandæan were his notes, yet how efficiently impotent every effort to make himself heard in the two-shilling gallery! How would he, bird like, “strain his little throat” for an *encore*!—which he never got, let his bones rattle for it ever so lustily. How would he roar ye, like any sucking dove, the terrifying and reiterated anathema of “Blood and thunder!” while he expressively touched the hilt of his sword, which was to scare the little cowardly Watty from his pretensions to Miss Tomboy’s purse and person. Then Diggy’s *Crop*—what a harvest was there! Who but will remember *the original* of the sleek and dusty miller of *No Song no Supper*? Who can forget him in the scene where his apple-dumpling visage was assailed by its appropriate adjunct, *Suett*,\* receiving thereon a pound of his own flour, his natal property, from the dexter hand of the sinister lawyer at his exit? Who shall describe Diggy’s countenance as he wiped away the meal from his well-fed face and partially obscured features, so eloquently expressive of his previously declared conviction to his wife that she had “a cake in the house?” Who, when looking in his dimpled face, could doubt the fact, or affect to gainsay the asser-

\* Mr. Suett, in Endless.

tion? What a rush of recollections come back upon the writer of this notice! Oh that we might now, as then, taste the flavour of Diggy's "Roast Beef" in the banquet-hall of the *Haunted Tower*!—so tender, yet so underdone! so fat and oozy! so redolent of all that appertains to Old England's boast! Hear we now again Michael Kelly's unctuous imitation in Lord William, and echo of Diggy's "Wondrous merry" in the supper scene! Methinks we yet see him (Diggy) as the exiled and disguised Count Harold, in *Peeping Tom of Coventry*, wandering about an outlaw in the populous streets of the especial city, from which he is banished, and confiding to the stocks and stones, in vocal reliance, the vital secret of his love and his despair. See we next his Sir John Loverule (the singer's *chef-d'œuvre*) in the *Devil to Pay*, in which character, apparelled in a hunting-dress of stringent stage-regulation, namely, a frock-coat of red serge, with large metal buttons, white vest, yellow tights and *top* boots, and jockey-cap over head elaborately frizzled and powdered, without a hair turned by his exercise, albeit well curled by his hair-dresser, with riding whip in hand, he stood over the foot-lights jerking out a song, every verse of which ended in a reiterated "Tantivy!" and an octave run from the top of his voice to the eighth note downwards, in professed praise of early rising, dewy fields, foxes, and five-barred gates,—all, if we except the first, being merely matters of history with Diggy, but of which he, nevertheless,

sung most loyally. Who but can recall him in this his favourite character, as he stood confronting Mrs. Jordan, while, as the enamoured Nell—with a lagging stress of wonder and admiration on every word, she summed up, in her hearty and glorious voice, his aggregate merit in one emphatic line,—

“There—r—r’s a husband for ye !”

But why dwell we upon Diggy’s professional excellences? They are engraven upon the tablet of every play-goer’s memory of his time, and must already be written on many a page for posterity’s information. It is his private *traits*, for readers yet unborn to rejoice in, that the pen is eager to record.

We set out with saying that Mr. Dignum was one of those single-minded, straightforward persons, who never by any accident deviate or step out of the routine of their own particular idea (we avoid the plural); wherefore, he never meddled with any thing that did not concern himself, by which precaution he avoided a world of trouble. He and an elder brother had been bred tailors; but Charles Dignum—“Diggy”—hated the position he was placed in, and could never fit himself to his work, nor his work to his customers. So he cut the shop-board instead of his cloth, and dropped from it one night upon the boards of a theatre; on which he remained ever after in measureless content, though as slipshod as when in his former workshop.

As we have said, Diggy was as harmless as a



new-born babe, which *he* would have called a *babby* ; and, like the aforesaid *Betty* and *Babby*, was totally incapable of a “wicked action”—*ergo*, would never set the Thames on fire ! Nay, it might have been a question whether he would have been aware of the existence of such a river, had not his swan-hopping excursions with civic dignitaries taught him to consider that silent highway specifically placed in its bed for the purpose of bearing the City barge, with its illustrious freight, annually between its verdant banks. On which occasions Diggy dined on board, and *off* turtle ; when for such entertainment he, turtle-like, cooed forth his share of the fugue of *Non nobis, Domine* : which praisegiving anthem, had he been called upon to translate into his mother-tongue, he would infallibly (not to speak profanely) have thus rendered :—

“Not to us (*singers*)—not to us ; but to thy name, *Lord Mayor*, be all the glory !”

Dignum, it may be inferred, was not the kind of person who would have invented gunpowder,—he was too humane ; but he was the sort of man that Julius Cæsar would have liked to have near him. He was of “such as sleep o’ nights ;” and, moreover, *fat* ; and fat people are remarkable, as the aforesaid Cæsar knew, for sweet temper ; and Diggy’s good-humour was never more manifest than in his toleration of what men of an ordinary cast of mind are apt to call *liberties*—when played off upon themselves ; but which persons of liberal faculties

term *pleasantries*, when practised against other people. Such the younger and more thoughtless portion of the green-room wags perpetually enacted with Diggy ; who, though bearing no resemblance to Solomon, was, like Solomon's good man, " satisfied from himself," and, consequently, bullet-proof against the shots of sarcasm and " pokes of fun " with which he was continually assailed in the said green-room ; when he would there appear dressed for one of his favourite characters, his aspect and demeanour were those of a man totally absorbed by the important task of the time. Indifferent to every opinion but his own ; ten minutes prior to the commencement of the piece in which he was to represent, — belike the aforesaid Crop the miller, Captain Sightly the officer, or, haply, something requiring a more lofty air and habiliment, bedight in shining garb or berobed in picturesque drapery — in whatever costume — he would, on entering the room, cross direct — as direct as he could — to the large mirror, *panting* (without metaphor) to see reflected therein his graceful figure and expressive face ! There would he stand, a breathing hieroglyphic of a self-satisfied man, arranging and re-arranging with nice and scrupulous care his well-powdered hair and drapery ; while his *fetch* (Mathews) would be seated on the corner of the sofa, close to his elbow, audibly soliloquizing *for* him in tones and language too much Diggy's own to be suspected, even by himself, to emanate from any

other person ; and he allowed the voice to utter his own meanings, apparently never doubting but that his conscious merits spoke naturally for themselves.

In sounds, therefore, which an envious or ill-natured person might have termed *guttural*, Diggy was thus supposed to breathe forth his aspirations, the preliminary and intervenient cadences and pauses of respiration, closely resembling the alternations of a large saw in a pit, laboriously urging its way through a deal-board. *Par exemple*:—

“ Augh, augh ! ” (the second augh being the return of the first) “ augh, augh ! ’paw my life, I look very well to-night ! I *think* so—I don’t know ! Do you ? (Augh, augh !) I’m undoubtedly well-dressed for the part—eh ? Good figure, too—decidedly well made ! Augh, augh ! too much *em-bonpoint*, perhaps, but that’s the venison—cheeks rather full. Augh, augh ! to be sure I eat a good deal of turtle—I *do* love turtle ! I suppose every body does. I don’t know—I think so—eh ? Do you ? Augh, augh ! good song to-night. Augh, augh ! wonder whether they’ll *encore* it ? *Ought !* I think so—I don’t *know*—eh ? Do you ? ”

Then laying his hand widely spread upon the left side of his capacious breast, he would (*i. e.* *Mathews* would) try the tone and compass of his voice, Diggy still looking in the glass, as if he had the face to think well of himself. Till, at length, aroused from the plethora of his self-love, by the

no longer suppressed titters of those present, and made conscious that he was not altogether alone with himself, he would turn round (how, indeed, could he turn otherwise?) and detect his "counter presentment" seated close to his own proper person.

"Aw, Mathews! is this you? (Augh, augh!) Aw, my dear boy! you're taking me off. Augh, augh! I see you are. Aw, it's very wrong! Augh, augh! you've got your hand on your breast like me. Augh, augh! you shouldn't imitate *nature*" (a word he mistook for habit); "it's not right, my dear fellow! I think so—I don't know—eh? Do you? Augh, augh!" (the dumpling here opening into a sugared smile): "'Paw my life, you're a sad fellow for taking off people! Augh, augh! go along, you're a wag I think so—I don't *know*—eh? Do you?"

It so happened that Mr. Mathews once every year invited Dignum to dine with him on a certain day; and it so fell out—by *mere chance*—that he never thought of asking the pleasure of Dignum's company at any other time; the form of invitation being verbal, sudden, and uniformly the same.

"My dear Dignum, you will much gratify me if you will dine with me on Wednesday next."

"Gaw bless your soul, my dear fellow!" would Diggy annually exclaim in a tone like that of a man whose worst corn had been ruthlessly trampled

upon ; or, as one might say, "*Are you mad ?*"  
"Augh, augh ! why next Wednesday's the 9th of November !"

"Well," would his inviter calmly reply—"well, and what when ?"

"Augh, augh ! Gaw bless your soul ! why, my dear boy, it's *Lord-Mayor's day* !"

"Well, and what then ?" again asked the *unconscious* Mathews. "What can Lord-Mayor's day have to do with your dining with *me* ?"

"Augh, augh ! Law love your soul ! Don't you know what Lord-Mayor's *day* is ? Every body knows what Lord-Mayor's day is—eh ? I don't know—I think so. Augh, augh ! why every fool knows that I dine at the Mansion House on Lord Mayor's day !"

"Well," declared Mathews, "*I didn't know it !*"

"Augh, augh ! No ?—'paw yer life ? Aw, my dear Mathews, you must be joking ! That's the worst of you, you're so fond of *joking* ! Augh, augh ! it's a bad habit you've got ! No sensible men joke. Augh, augh ! *I've* no time for joking. Augh, augh, my dear fellow ! shouldn't joke on *serious* occasions ! I think so—I don't *know*—eh ? Do *you* ?"

"Well, then, *seriously*, Dignum ; you have refused me so often, that I hope for once you'll send an excuse into the City, and come and eat your beef with me on Wednesday."

"Law love your soul, my dear fellow ! What !

send an excuse to my Lord-Mayor? Shews how little you know of this world ! Augh, augh, why it's *impossible* ! Don't you know what a great man my *Lord-Mayor* is? Next to the king, you know ! Augh, augh — *is* king of the City ! His Majesty can't go through Temple Bar without asking his leave, you know ! Augh, augh ! *must* dine with my Lord-Mayor when he commands. Aw, my dear, dear Mathews !" (assuming an air and tone of solemnity) "you never go to public dinners. You've a *great* loss ! Augh, augh ! my dear fellow, you *should* go to those in the City ; they're so intellectual ! Augh, augh ! *I* think so—I don't *know*—eh ? Do *you* ? Aw ! (another smile) But you're such a fellow for *fun* ! Augh, augh ! Aw ! (persuasively) let me introduce you to his lordship ! Augh, augh ; you'll like him very much. He's quite affable, I assure you ; and then he's such a good creature ! *So* attentive !—always sends me a piece of fat with my venison—can't disappoint *him* ! Augh, augh !—treats one so like a gentleman—puts my name upon a plate, and pays me two guineas after dinner ! Augh, augh !—lets me go as soon as I've sung *my song*—treats me *quite* like a gentleman !"

" Well, then, Dignum, you won't oblige me with your company ?"

" Law love you, my dear Mathews ! it's out of my power—*must* go to my Lord-Mayor—never for-

give me, if I stay away—should lose the best friend I have to my back !”

“ Why,” urged Mathews, “ you can’t know much of him ?”

“ Augh, augh ! not know *much* of him ! Gaw bless you soul ! not know my *Lord-Mayor* ! Why, bless you, I’ve dined with his lordship every 9th of November these twenty years ! I *ought* to know him, I think ! Augh, augh ! why he’s the oldest friend I have on earth ! I *think* so—I don’t *know*—eh ? Do *you* ?

Let it not be erroneously supposed, from the preceding account, that Dignum’s social experience was confined to only city nobles. By happy fortune he once found himself within the walls of a noble duke, who had on some occasion invited, or granted him permission, when he travelled into Leicestershire, to stop at Belvoir Castle. The delicacy of the viands, the beauty of the duchess, and urbanity of the duke, with the general splendour of the place, threw Diggy into ecstasies of admiration and delight, and his noble entertainer was probably not a little amused in his turn by the manner and phraseology in which the admirer’s gratification was expressed. Amongst the paintings which called for Dignum’s artistical notice, appeared the portrait of the illustrious Marquis of Granby, which Diggy at once recognised as a great likeness.

“ Augh, augh ! that’s the Marquess of Granby ! Aw, my lord duke, I’ve often seen his picture

before!" His grace was curious to know where. "Gaw bless your soul, my lord duke! I've seen I don't know how many *signs* of him—very fine paintings—over the inn-doors: saw one hanging across the road as I rode along to-day. Augh, augh! Aw, I knew him again the moment I looked at his picture! Augh, augh! I suppose he 's a relation of yours, my lord duke? Augh, augh! What a deal of gold lace he wore upon his coat! your family must be very proud of him! Augh, augh! I observe he was always painted with a bald head—it 's very remarkable! Augh, augh! I suppose he *had* a bald head—*must* have had! Augh, augh! I *think* so—I don't *know*—eh! Do *you*?"

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GEORGE FREDERICK COOKE.

IN LONDON, AMERICA, AND SCOTLAND.

"Oh, that men should put an enemy in their mouths to steal away their brains!"

"To be now a sensible man, by and by a fool, and presently a beast! Oh, strange!"

Every inordinate cup is unblessed, and the ingredient is a devil."—SHAKESPEARE.

COOKE IN LONDON.

It was always remarkable that Mr. Cooke, when in a state of sobriety—which lasted sometimes for



months together after any excess, deplored even more by himself than others, and which never failed to be followed by shame and repentance—was, without any effort, a *gentleman* in the most extended sense of the word,—in ideas, words, habits, and actions ; perfectly benevolent in his feelings, and moderate alike in judgment and opinion ; peculiarly modest of his own merits, and liberal in his estimate of those of others. Yet, let him swallow but one drop beyond the wholesome limit, and the honey was turned to gall ; the *Bottle Imp* mastered his better nature ; and he became vulgar, noisy, intolerant, and intolerable ; apt to injure, quick to take offence, and still quicker to resent it. The following facts will illustrate these observations :—

In the early part of Cooke's London career, when his popularity was at its apex, he was, of course, a great card in the hands of the manager of Covent Garden theatre ; and Mr. Harris (father of the late Mr. Henry Harris), the then proprietor of the establishment, found himself disposed to be exceedingly courteous and obliging to the great favourite of the public who was so amply filling his treasury ; although this kindly disposition was, truth to say, put sometimes to rather too severe a test by Mr. Cooke, who had many favours to ask, not only on his own account, but also for the pleasure and profit of others, whom Mr. Harris felt neither interest nor necessity to oblige. Still Mr. Cooke was not a person to be refused ; and the scruples that would at the first blush of the actor's

request arise, would eventually give way to the petitioner, and his wish acceded to by the polite and politic manager. Indeed Mr. Harris was often a sufferer by such concessions. Cooke frequently urged the beneficial effects of his performance in the country for some indigent brother actor; and permission would be given for a night's absence, by which indulgence the interests of Covent Garden were too apt to be injured, either from the tragedian's tardiness of return at the due period of his London duties, or by his appearing at the last moment when the greatest suspense and anxiety had been suffered by all connected with the theatre, and presenting himself in a state of intoxication upon the stage, and thus disappointing the assembled "multitude" of their expected treat,—a disappointment not unfrequently manifested by unequivocal signs and tokens, such as actors cannot under any circumstances or by any sophistry mistake for compliment.\*

\* On one occasion when Cooke fell under the merited rebuke of a crowded house by a repeated instance of gross intemperance, having vainly tried to recollect the beginning of *Richard's* first soliloquy, he tottered forward with a cunning yet maudlin intent to divert the indignation expressed into a false channel; and laying his hand impressively upon his chest to insinuate that illness was the only cause of his failure, with upturned eyes supplicating all the sympathy of his audience, he hiccupped out the unlucky words, "*My old complaint!*" which were applied so aptly, that a simultaneous burst of derisive laughter followed "the weak invention," and renewed hisses at length dismissed him from the stage for the night.

In the season of 1803 or 4, Mr. Cooper, the American tragedian, had been performing a series of characters at Drury Lane Theatre ; and being extremely intimate with Cooke, it naturally occurred to him that his performance with him in *Othello* on his benefit night, would be a great attraction, if Mr. Harris's permission could be obtained. Cooke who, in his natural character, was one of the kindest of men, instantly undertook to apply to Mr. Harris, giving Cooper some hope of success, although both felt the awkwardness, if not indelicacy, of soliciting the loan of an actor for the benefit of a rival theatre, whose performance was drawing such enormous receipts into his own. But Cooke's friendship mastered these considerations, and the attempt at least must be made.

Mr. Harris resided at this period at Belmont, near Uxbridge, where one afternoon Mr. Cooke was announced. The weather was intensely severe, and the visit augured some pressing cause not more genial than the day to the manager's feelings ; for Cooke seldom called but to make some request, generally difficult to be reconciled or granted. Still, on the present occasion, Mr. Harris was "very happy to see Mr. Cooke," and "hoped he came to stay dinner ;" which hope was unnoticed by the actor, who nervously proceeded to break the unreasonable nature of his visit, and he began in broken accents to explain his errand : "My *dear* sir !—Cooper—the best creature in the world—been

acting at Drury Lane—going to take a benefit—*Othello*—*Iago*—bring him a great house. In fine, *would* Mr. Harris allow him (Cooke) to perform the character of *Iago* for his friend on his benefit night?”

Mr. Harris looked very blank at this certainly unfair demand upon his self-interest. He shook his head ominously, and gravely asked Mr. Cooke whether he did not think it *rather* more than he ought to grant, considering the vast importance of his exclusive services, and the numbers that would naturally follow him to Drury Lane who would otherwise reserve themselves for Covent Garden, where the receipts must necessarily be injured on the particular night by the great drag in favour of the other theatre, &c.

These and other arguments were mildly but determinately combatted by Cooke in his best and most gentlemanlike manner; for “Cooper, the best creature in the world,” was to be served; and Mr. Harris being at length overcome, Cooke’s heart and eyes overflowed with generous delight and gratitude for the power thus afforded him to benefit a friend. Mr. Harris now reminded him of the dinner; but Cooke declined the invitation. “No—he would take a crust, and *one* glass of wine to warm him, and then return to town.” After a polite struggle, Mr. Harris yielded to his visiter’s determination; and a tray was produced, accompanied by a bottle of Madeira. Of this Cooke sipped and

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sipped with the most imperturbable self-complacency, until he nearly finished the bottle ; when, by his master's order, the butler brought in another, of which Cooke had swallowed a few glasses, when a sudden recollection operated upon his mind, as Mr. Harris made some remark upon the increasing severity of the weather. Cooke, a little "*warmed*" by the wine he had taken, now bethought himself of a circumstance which his fervour for his friend's interest and the Madeira had together totally obliterated for the time, for he arose abruptly, and, taking Mr. Harris's hand, broke to him this new matter. "My *dear Sir*, your goodness so overpowered all other recollections, that it made me entirely forget that I left my friend, dear Cooper, the best creature in the world, at the gate when I came in. Let me send for him, to thank you for your generous permission in his favour."

"Bless me !" exclaimed Mr. Harris, in much distress, "has Mr. Cooper been out in the cold of this dreadful day all this time ? How sorry I am that you did not mention this before ! I am quite ashamed that I have seemed so rude and inhospitable." And, spite of Cooke's assuring him that "dear Cooper" would not mind it, he being "the best creature in the world," Mr. Harris rang the bell, and desired the servant to request Mr. Cooper's company within doors. By this time the Madeira might be said to have *warmed* Mr. Cooke more than half through ; the second bottle was rapidly diminishing, and he

was full of feelings generous as the wine. Again and again he clasped his liberal manager's hands in thankfulness for his kindness, reiterating, "My *dear Sir*, you're *too good* to me! I can never repay such friendly treatment; I'm bound to you eternally," &c. &c.

[*Enter the "best creature in the world," blue with stagnation, and frozen to his finger-ends.*]

Mr. Harris apologised to Mr. Cooper, and explained the cause of his tardy invitation, placing a chair for him near the fire. Cooke, without noticing him, continued his maudlin praise of his host's hospitality and goodness; afterwards informing Cooper of his having given consent to the performance in question; for which favour Mr. Cooper also expressed, as well as his shivering state would permit, his thanks, and, at the recommendation of Mr. Harris, accepted a glass of Madeira, in order to thaw his congealed faculties. Cooke was now all hilarity and happiness. Another bottle was suggested, and promptly supplied; and immediately the servant returned to announce the dinner, to which Mr. Harris again pressed Cooke, and invited Cooper. Mr. Cooke, however, would not hear of it. He *must*, he said, return to town to dinner, and "dear Cooper" *must* accompany him; and he insisted upon Mr. Harris leaving him and the "best creature in the world" together in the library, where they would take "just *one* glass more, and then depart." Mr. Harris was not sorry that Mr. Cooke still re-

fused to dine with him, it being sufficiently evident that he had anticipated his share of the wine at table, and might not prove as desirable a companion as he would otherwise have been to his family and friends, and now took his leave, but not before Cooke had reiterated his enduring sense of the favour shown him, and renewed his fervent protestations of everlasting gratitude to his "*esteemed friend.*" During dinner, Mr. Harris related the occasion of Mr. Cooke's visit ; and in the course of the time, inquired of the servants whether the gentlemen were gone. He was answered in the negative, and informed that Mr. Cooke had called for more wine, and that Mr. Cooper had vainly pressed him to depart. At this moment, a guest inquired whether Mr. Cooke performed that night, which question made Mr. Harris start from his chair in sudden alarm, exclaiming, "Is this Wednesday? He *does* play! What is it o'clock?" at the same time taking out his watch in great agitation, he exclaimed, "Take away the wine ; don't let him drink *a drop* more! He must go away *directly*, or I shall have the theatre pulled down. He is advertised for *Richard the Third*, and he can barely get back in time to dress!"

Back rushed the agitated proprietor to the library, where he found Cooper using every argument in his power to dissuade his indiscreet friend from drinking any more. But Cooke had already put too much of the enemy into his mouth not to be completely

minus of brains, and, as usual under such privation, was utterly irrational and impersuasive.

"Do you forget," urged the unfortunate proprietor, "that this is a play-night, Mr. Cooke? Even now you are expected in town. I entreat you will go without further delay, or you will be too late, and the consequences will be terrible!"

Cooke, in what he meant to be a most insinuating tone of voice, *blessed* his "excellent friend;" again lauded his liberality and kindness, which he declared could never be forgotten or repaid by the devotion of his whole life, and finally begged the additional favour of *one* more bottle of his Madeira for himself and "dear Cooper," who, he repeated for the twentieth time, was "the best creature in the world." To this request Mr. Harris gave a positive and concise negative, afterwards apologizing for such seeming breach of hospitality, placing before Mr. Cooke's view the danger he was hazarding by delay, and rendering himself unfit for his evening's duty. All was in vain; for Cooke, though equally civil, was also determined, and again and again coaxingly urged his request for *one* more bottle. At length, finding Mr. Harris inflexible, the Madeira he *had* drank began to proclaim the indignation it had engendered in Mr. Cooke's grateful bosom; and as the liquor fermented, it raised the recipient up to a state of inflation which threatened to burst all bounds, and he now assailed his host with the most opprobrious epithets; so that, even-



tually, by the potency of "the drink," his late "excellent friend," Mr. Harris, was converted into a "vulgar, old, soap-boiling scoundrel," who did not know how to treat a *gentleman* when one condescended to visit him; and Mr. Harris was imperiously asked, "Do you know who I am, Sir? Am I not George Frederick Cooke? — without whose talents you would be confined to your own grease-tub; and who will never more darken your inhospitable doors while he lives, nor uphold your contemptible theatre any longer after this night!" And with many other threats and delicate inuendoes in relation to Mr. Harris's soap-boiling pursuits not herein set down, he staggered out of the room with the assistance of the "best creature in the world," whom he now distinguished by every ill name that drunkenness could remember or invent, for daring to direct or control *him*, *George Frederick Cooke*! when the great tragedian reeled into the attendant chaise, and was driven to town with his grieved and much-abused friend, "Dear Cooper!"

That night the audience did *not* mistake "the drunkard for a god," for the great "George Frederick Cooke" was hissed off the stage, and obliged to leave his performance unfinished; and it was some time ere "Richard was himself again."\*

\* Mr. Cooke performed *Iago* for Mr. Cooper on the appointed night, which witnessed a double tragedy. Mrs. Pope, while performing one of the scenes of *Desdemona*, was suddenly death-struck, and fell back into the arms of Mr. Cooke, and conveyed home, where she expired soon after!

## COOKE IN AMERICA.

*"It stands not safe with us—*

*The terms of our estate may not endure*

*Hazard so near us, and doth hourly grow*

*Out of his lunes."*—SHAKESPEARE.

MR. COOKE had made an extraordinary impression on the American stage, and his society was anxiously sought in private. Early after his arrival he was invited to dine with a large party, and during the first portion of the time he delighted every body present with his urbanity, politeness, and the marked intelligence of his mind. There were no ladies of the party, and the bottle remained rather too long "in hand;" and in its course the wine suddenly turning to vinegar by the process of fermentation upon the stomach of Cooke, he all at once began to curve his lip, round his elbows, and draw up his head, in scorn of his entertainer and his friends—a transition which confounded every body; in short, Mr. Cooke's natural manner was entirely reversed. He contradicted all that was said; and became altogether so rude and offensive that those present, who had been previously charmed with his bland and well-bred manner and conversation, were now disgusted with his coarseness, and one by one fell off in their notice of him, and entering upon local themes, conversed with each other upon the passing events of their own particular

circle. Cooke had discernment enough left to be conscious that he had committed himself, and lost *caste* with the persons present ; and as he filled his glass, on each occasion gathered new ground of dissatisfaction. He felt himself neglected—overlooked. Resentment grew by what it fed on, and promised vengeance in due course ; while his hoarded discontent only waited for opportunity to vent itself. It appeared from the conversation, that a robbery had recently taken place in the house of a gentleman present—a very uncommon event in an American city ; and he was questioned as to the particulars, which he detailed at some length, and with a minuteness which Cooke deemed quite unworthy the occasion, especially as no part of the account was addressed to *him*. In fact, his very presence seemed to be forgotten. This mortified him to the quick, and excited his indignation, which was in proportion to his consciousness, notwithstanding the wine he had taken, that the neglect he experienced had been drawn upon him by himself. The relater of the robbery coming to the close of his account, Cooke vainly hoped for a cue which might enable him to exhibit the contempt he now felt for his American associates, but he was in despair of a fitting opportunity for venting his disgust. At this crisis the gentleman observed, in conclusion of his story, that the only serious part of his regret, in relation to the described event, arose from the irreparable loss of the family jewels.

Here Cooke's malice found an opening ; and uttering an exclamation that almost startled every man upon his legs by its violence, in his most grinding and sarcastic tones, with his face puckered up to an expression of the direst scorn he bellowed forth—

“ Your *what*, Sir ? Your *family jewels* !” adding, in an actor's aside, with a gritty laugh, by way of parenthesis, “ A Yankee Doodle's family jewels !—what are they, Sir ? An American's family jewels ! I suppose you mean,—*the handcuffs and fetters* !”

With a mildness which spoke honourably of their forbearance, the parties suffered the temporary madman to depart at the close of this outrageous attack without any indication of resentment, though they might have addressed him in the language of the grieved Othello, more in sorrow than in anger,—

“ I love thee, Cassio, but never more be officer of mine,”

for Mr. Cooke was never again invited by the same party.

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## COOKE IN SCOTLAND.

“ One cup more, an’ thou lovedst me.”

COOKE, one day calling upon a bachelor friend in Edinburgh who had ordered an early dinner for the purpose of being at the theatre in good time to witness the great tragedian’s performance, invited himself to partake of what was just then upon the table. His host, who on the *present* occasion would rather have dispensed with the *tête-à-tête*, could not do otherwise than permit the visit ; but knowing the necessity of his friend being very abstemious and collected for his coming duty, and being aware of the plague-spot with which Cooke was marked, and could not at all times conceal, he was cautious not to offer him enough to inflame it ; and therefore, “ not to task his weakness,” the host was very chary of his bottle, taking little from it himself, by way of excuse for not passing it often to his guest. Notwithstanding his friendly reserve, Cooke contrived to obtain sufficient wine to render him desirous of more ; but the prudent master of the house, who felt his own responsibility at the moment to the whole of the Edinburgh audience, was blind and deaf to the actor’s hints, and Cooke, though quite aware that his friend’s non-convivial behaviour was wisely and kindly occasioned, nevertheless felt much teased and tantalised by such reserve, and became

moody and silent for a time in his discontent.  
Thus

“We often see, against some storms, the bold winds speechless,”

At the close of the dinner, the servant, in compliance with Scottish custom, was about to hand the *farintosh*, which his master had unluckily forgotten to countermand. On the present occasion he caused the delicious poison to be placed near him, and looking anxiously at Cooke, as if he would have said “I am afraid to give you any of this,” and at the same time perceiving that his guest waited with expectant lips for the accustomed portion, the host slowly and reluctantly poured out about a third part of the usual quantity, and timidly presenting the *wee drappie* to his visiter, observed, with a faint smile, “You may venture to drink *that*, Mr. Cooke, it cannot, I think, *hurt* you.” Cooke was unprepared for this ; he “grinned horribly a ghastly smile,” and then an awful frown gathered on his stern brow as he surveyed, with the most sovereign contempt, the mere *thimble-full* offered of the liquor that he loved, and with a rueful expression of disappointment, he neglected to take the offered glass ; which his friend mistaking for prudent forbearance, again observed that he thought “it would not *hurt* him.” “No, Sir !” replied his indignant guest, in grating tones of irony, as he held it up, “nor would it if it were

*aqua fortis!*” adding with an authoritative voice, which seemed to be borrowed from Jove’s thunder, and loud enough “to fright the isle from its propriety,” “*Fill the glass, Sir!* Am I not George Frederick Cooke? ‘born to command ten thousand slaves like thee!’ *Fill the glass, I say,* and refuse me at your peril!”

He was *obeyed*, and Melpomene wept the while! The *whiskey* acted *that* night instead of *Cooke!*

It was very suprising how Mr. Cooke escaped the rigorous chastisement which his offensive cup-valour so often merited. Impunity seemed his peculiar privilege under the most flagrant occasions.

The following instance of Christian-like meekness and forbearance occurred one night in Liverpool which is worthy of record. Cooke had appeared upon the stage one night while under the influence of the demon—*drink*. He was, as in most places, an immense favourite with the Liverpool audience, who fully appreciated his vast powers and were entirely disposed to regard the failings of the man as venial and accidental, while his intrinsic qualities were solid and positive; indulgence, therefore, to his *one occasional* infirmity was willingly shewn. But there are limits, unhappily, to human charity, and on the evening alluded to Cooke’s *dark hour* o’ershadowed his professional and private excellences; he was, in fact, incapable of proceeding in his performance with bearable propriety, and public favour was suddenly obscured by public resentment

elicited by his disgusting state, and manifested at length by indications of a pretty general and expressive nature, which, dimmed as Cooke's perceptions were by his situation and the "potations pottle deep" which he had swallowed, proved comprehensive enough to his practised experience, and stepping forward to the stage lamps, with his powerful brow contracted with disdain, he addressed his reprovers in the following pithy sentence:—

"What! do you hiss me?—hiss George Frederick Cooke?—you contemptible money-getters! you shall never again have the *honour* of hissing me! Farewell! *I banish you!*" And concentrating into one vast heap all the malice of his offended feelings, he added, after a pause of intense meaning, "*There is not a brick in your dirty town but what is cemented by the blood of a negro!*"

This shameful address was suffered without notice, and the utterer of it was allowed to retire without further manifestation of resentment—a moderation speaking volumes in proof of the good sense and good temper of the Liverpool public.

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## COOKE IN SHYLOCK.

THE great celebrity of this extraordinary actor did not render him forgetful of those "whose baser stars do shut them up in" the obscurity of a country theatre, and consequent poverty; he frequently exerted his rare talents gratuitously for his less gifted brethren of the sock and buskin in the provinces; and when not engaged on the metropolitan stage, occasionally gave "a night" to the necessities of the "poorer born."

On one of these benevolent occasions he had pledged himself to appear in some small town, in his celebrated part in the *Merchant of Venice*, wherein he was indeed

"The Jew  
That Shakspeare drew."

On his arrival, on the morning of performance, Cooke found the "theatre" little better than a *barn*, and a genuine "Dunstable company" greeted him at rehearsal, during which the "Silvester Daggers" of the building gave him a taste of their quality in their several *new readings* of the poet, and a foretaste of the joys in store for him at night, from the general imperfection of his co-adjutors, especially in the scene in which Salarino and Salanio taunt Shylock with his daughter's flight.

It appeared that this little community of "poor

players"—*poor* in every sense—was numerically, as well as generally, weak, and incompetent in more ways than one, to the representation of a play of Shakspeare ; it followed that several of the characters were obliged to be what is techichally called *doubled*. Thus the performer whose name appeared in the bills for the night, feathery Gratiano, was compelled, in the language of the turf, to *carry weight*, by the anonymous addition of Salanio to his first undertaking. In this Siamese union of two souls in one body, it happened, as in bodies *politic*, that the minister, to the general sustainment of his post, leaned to the most profitable side ; and hence the supporter of the two-fold weight had devoted his best energies to the interests of the principal duty assigned him, and thought but little of the lesser and comparatively unimportant one so unfairly buckled on his back, until the moment when he was called upon to rehearse the scene with Mr. Cooke in the third act, where his deficiency was immediately noted by the Shylock of the night, who patiently and politely explained to him the necessity of Salanio being *literally* perfect in the few lines he had to utter in this particular scene ; otherwise, as Shakspeare had therein indulged, as he often did, in a *play upon words*, unless the text in one instance was delivered correctly, and to the letter, Shylock could not proceed, as the point of his rejoinder entirely depended upon the precise words of the author. Mr. Cooke's explanation was listened to with defer-

ence and respectful attention by the person addressed, and with a good disposition to do, justly, the great man's bidding. But the poor actor's head was too full of Gratiano's "infinite deal of nothing" to find room for the unwelcome Salanio, whose few words being clearly of no value to his *own* reputation in the play, he had but imperfectly considered in reference to another's.

It must here be remembered that Salarino, when he and Salanio are mischievously twitting the malevolent Jew with his daughter Jessica's flight, has to say, "*I, for my part, knew the tailor that made the wings she flew withal ;*" to which Salanio remarks, "*And Shylock, for his own part, knew the bird was fledged ; and then it is the complexion of them all to leave their dam.*"

At rehearsal, the *double*, who did not know a *single line*, carelessly observed, in place of the above, "*Ay, it is the way of them all to leave their father's house.*" "No, no, no !" exclaimed the discomfited star. "My dear Sir, don't you know the next line I have to speak ? If you do not say, '*It is the complexion of them all to leave their dam,*' how can I reply upon the word, and say, '*She's damned* for it ? If you omit the word *dam*, the whole sense of my next speech is confounded. You *must* utter the word *dam*, or I cannot reply at all." "True, Sir, I see," observed the well-intentioned *double* ; "then I'll *say* it." He forthwith made several unsuccessful attempts to deliver the text ; but ulti-

mately comforted Mr. Cooke with the assurance that he would be perfect *by night*. And indeed he did his best to keep his promise, fervently reiterating, to the great confusion and dismay of the attendant scene-shifters, carpenters, prompter, and property man,—who, like Lord Tyrawley's unfortunate battalion, stood embodied in *one man*—between the earlier scenes of his conflicting duties, the indispensable *dam*, upon which so much seemed to depend, wildly and earnestly repeating it,—“*Dam, dam, dam,—DAM ! But oh !*

“ ‘ *Double, double,*  
Toil and trouble.’ ”

Poor Salanio increased in nervous trepidation as the moment of his responsibility approached ; and as it often happens that an overwrought anxiety to remember a thing does not always prevent our forgetting it at the proper time, with all his care and study to retain the needful phrase which was to exasperate Shylock's paternal ire to its very acme, like a false friend, it threatened to desert him at his direst need ; and when the critical scene commenced, the over-burdened actor felt his words, like Bob Acre's valour, *oozing out at the finger-ends* of his memory, and all the pain and toil that he had undergone since the morning to fix, and as it were to *dam up*, the erratic stream of his recollection, in order that its evening's course might run smooth, had not secured it from premature escape ; consequently

when the dreaded period of trial arrived, and Salario duly observed that he "knew the tailor that made the wings" Jessica "flew withal," the agitated Salanio, after a momentary, breathless pause of doubt and alarm, cried out, with the energy of despair, "I knew him *too*,—and he wasn't worth a *d—n*!"

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#### SUETT AND HIS SON THEOPHILUS.

MR. SUETT one day passing, with his son *Theophilus*, through St. Martin's Court after a rehearsal at Drury Lane Theatre, fancying he perceived a tendency to tartness in his lively son as they approached a certain shop-window filled with sweet poisons, led him within, "There," said the fond father, "eat away, *The*. my dear, '*sweets to the sweets*!' but don't make yourself sick, my dragon." The boy surveyed, with the ogre-eye of school-boy avidity, the well-covered counter, from which he fed his sharp appetite, even to satiety, while his father read some letters which had just been placed in his hand at the stage-door. At length, the little gormandizer appeased, his father enquired of the woman behind the counter, in his habitual phraseology, What was *the damage*? which question, not being exactly comprehended by

the person to whom it was addressed, he put in a more intelligible form. The woman satisfied him, after her fashion, that his little lump of Suett had absorbed flour and lard, to the amount of what her queer customer would have termed "a *Hog*;" and he put his hand first into one pocket, then into another, but, to his surprise, this application to his usually unfailing bank was answered by—"no effects." Apologizing to the woman for the accident of his having left home without money, telling her that he had omitted, when he changed his "nankeens," to take his purse out of the discarded "smalls," but that he would call and pay the shilling the next day.

This arrangement being counter to the shop-woman's custom, was objected to, and, to Suett's great surprise, the pastry-cook tartly informed him that she could not consent to this, as she never gave credit.

"Don't you, indeed, Ma'am? Oh, dear! that's very awkward. Oh, ho! oh, lard! oh, dear! what's to be done, then?" cried Suett.

"Don't know, indeed, Sir," answered the woman.

"Well, but, Ma'am," resumed Suett, "do you mean to say that you will have the money whether I have it or no? I tell you I've none about me—have you any, *Thee*.?"

"No, Pa," replied the almost frightened boy.

"There, Ma'am, you see we have neither of us any money."

"Can't help it, Sir," said the woman, coldly;

"Can't trust strangers."

"Well," replied the comedian, "if I tell you who I am, perhaps that will do?"

"Perhaps it may, Sir."

"Well, then, Ma'am, my name's *Suett*, and this little dragon is my son, *The*."

"Don't know you, Sir," replied the woman.

"What!" exclaimed the Comedian, "not know *Suett*?—*Dickey Suett*! oh dear, O, lard! why, my name's pasted against every wall in the neighbourhood:—you ought to know it."

"Can't help that, Sir."

"Oh, lawk! oh, dear! never heard of *Dickey Suett*!—well, that's what I call a *circumstance*!—then what's to be done?"

"Don't know, indeed, Sir," said the woman, doggedly.

"Well, but, Ma'am, you don't mean to say you will not let me go away without paying?"

"Yes, sir; can't let you leave the shop without the money."

"Oh, lard! oh, dear! ah, ha! oh, ho! why *The*! it's all dickey with us, my dragon—we can't go home to dinner!"

The boy now began to whimper with a vague idea of a prospective appetite unsatisfied. *Suett*, nettled at the woman's pertinacity, affected indifference. "Never mind, *The*. my boy! don't cry, my dragon! Very unhandsome of you, Ma'am, to detain a gentleman for such a trifle—but never mind—sit down, *The*. Oh, lard! oh, dear!—don't cry, my boy; we'll sit down close to the window,

and perhaps somebody will own us. Ah, ha! oh, ho! oh dear! At this moment somebody stopped at the window, and Mr. Suett cried out, "ah, ha! here we are, the real goods! Here we are, *two for a shilling!*"

Suett's figure was of the *greyhound* make, but he felt now more like a *tarrier*, for he saw nobody pass for a considerable time that he knew; at last, jumping suddenly from the stool on which he was seated, he cried out to a passer-by—

"Ho! halo! Caulfield! Caulfield!"

Mr. Caulfield, one of Suett's best mimics, stopped, and entered the shop.

"Here," said Suett, triumphantly, to the woman, "is a friend of mine, Ma'am, who will settle my account with you, I'm sure."

The woman, lifting her eyes to the new comer, dropped a curtesy, saying—

"How d'ye do, Mr. Caulfield?"

"Oh, ho!" cried Suett, "What, ye know Mr. Caulfield, then, do you?—Oh, lard!"

"Oh, yes, Sir!" was the smiling reply.

"Well, that's what I call a real piece of goods," observed Suett; "you know who Mr. Caulfield is, and never heard of Dickey Suett!"

Caulfield now looked for an explanation, which Suett gave him.

"Why, Caulfield, my boy, I never was so ill-used in all my life; you must lend me some money, my dragon."

"With all my heart," replied Caulfield, putting his hand in his pocket, "How much?"



“ Oh, not much,” said his friend ; “ you’ll hardly believe it—but a real *circumstance* has occurred—what I call a genuine piece of goods. Oh, dear ! Oh, lawk ! oh, dear ! Why, here, here’s *Dickey Suett* and his son, *The.*, in pawn in a tart-shop for a *Shilling* !”

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#### SUETT’S FUNERAL.

It too often happens that, in the midst of the most heart-touching ceremonies, when individual feeling is deep and serious, something of the ludicrous will force its way through the general propriety of the scene, to the perception of some person more open to such impressions than others, for which reason it is hazardous to enlist accessories to any solemnity, who cannot be supposed to have at heart the absorbing interest which belongs naturally to the principals : thus funerals, when many are present, are not always attended with that unbroken propriety which the occasion demands, and the feelings of the bereft require.

In the July of 1805, Mr. Suett died. He was a person, when living, much liked by his theatrical brethren, who felt, perhaps, that they could have better spared a better man. By this, it must not be inferred that Mr. Suett was a bad man ; but it would be affectation to suppose that any one who

ever heard of that delightful *droll* can be ignorant that he possessed one failing—such a one as robs worth of much grace in the eyes of the temperate.

It being arranged by some of the principal performers of Drury Lane Theatre to pay the departed comedian that tribute of respect which, alas! but gratifies the survivors, it happened that one of the mourning-coaches provided on the sad occasion was occupied by Messrs. Mathews and Caulfield, Suett's doubles, to which of whose imitations of the deceased it would have been difficult to give a preference, so perfect were both. This pair of mocking-birds were perched on opposite seats; they had been, during Mr. Suett's life, in the habit of talking to each other invariably in his tones and manner,—using his peculiar phrases, and even looking like him, their tall slim figures agreeing perfectly with his. When ever these "twin Dickies," as they were called when together, met in presence of the great original, there were *three* Suetts in the field.

Such association naturally arising in a party not affected by the occasion beyond a common regret, might be expected to furnish matter deep and dangerous to general gravity; but, as it proved, the past held no power over the present. Mr. Wroughton, it is true, looked severely serious occasionally at my Husband, and Robert Palmer scowled at Caulfield. Whether these checks from the members of the *old* school had any weight that kept down the buoyancy of their younger brethren may not be

affirmed ; suffice it, that neither word nor look for one moment disturbed the seriousness all exhibited during the melancholy drive.

Mr. Suett had been a St. Paul's boy ; and it had therefore been arranged that his mortal remains should be deposited in the churchyard of the cathedral, to which the hearse was now followed by his brother actors. All had proceeded with the strictest decorum and attention to the last solemn, heart-chilling ceremony, and the mourners were turning away from the spot where "dust to dust" had been consigned ; but as they did so, all were startled by sounds "unmusical to Volscian ears, and doubly harsh to,"—the delicate and susceptible organs of performers, and which at once broke up the awful stillness of the scene. The noise was *as of serpents* accompanied by a simultaneous clapping of hands ; both sounds were peculiarly calculated to strike the sensitive tympanums of actors, and all stood confounded ; the clergyman turned round with a severe look, as if to reprove the rude perpetrator of such an outrage ; and the performers eagerly looked for the source of this (as it seemed) *mixed professional notice* of poor Suett's final exit from the stage of life. The cause of this curious effect was at once apparent. On an adjacent tomb, a boy, who had probably placed himself on that elevation for the more conveniently witnessing the ceremony just concluded, was perceived, still clapping and hissing vehemently,—as it was afterwards found, with the view of instigating

two dogs to fight, that it was evident were more than half disposed to gratify him by taking the hint.

The unconscious culprit stood confessed ; and, the matter thus accounted for, the clergyman resumed his composure, and with eyes cast down moved away ; while the actors, glancing furtively from one to another with an incipient smile quivering on their lips, immediately raised their white handkerchiefs to their faces, and in "decent sorrow" re-entered their coaches, where they continued profoundly silent till they once more alighted ; when something that might have been mistaken for the voice of the departed, was heard in dialogue, and the ghost of buried Denmark finally exclaimed, "*Oh la ! oh dear ! Ho—ho ! Ha—ha ! Why, my dragons ! that boy was a genuine piece of Goods ! what I call a real Circumstance Oh dear ! oh la !!!*" Robert Palmer took a larger pinch of snuff than usual, and walked away. Mr. Wroughton faintly smiled, and holding a finger up with an expressive meaning to the *twain Dickies*, cast his eyes upon the ground, and gravely muttered, as he took his leave,

*" Rest, rest, perturbed spirit !"*

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## KNIGHT\* AND MATHEWS.

MR. EDWARD KNIGHT ("Little Knight") that delightful and quaint actor—the "Jerry Blossom" and other rustics of the drama—was an enthusiast in whatever he gave his mind to.

He had commenced life as a miniature painter, but very soon after, transferred the delicate touches of his pencil to the broader effects of stage canvass, and thence to closer copyings from life upon the boards of theatres, which he continued to adorn with the truest touches from nature, until his rather premature death closed his earthly scene.

Besides being an excellent artist and actor, he was also a dramatic author of several popular pieces.

At the period to which this account relates, about 1814, Mr. Knight was about to produce his farce of "A Chip of the Old Block" which was coming out at the Haymarket, under the auspices of his friend Mr. Mathews, for whom he had written the principal character.

Mr. Knight was, as we have said, an enthusiastic person, and a great admirer of my Husband; himself a man of talent, and naturally generous and ardent, he worshipped unfeignedly that of others. Mr.

\* Father to the admirable painter of his name.

Knight was an artist in a double sense, and looked with a skilful eye upon the features of the mind as well as those of the face.

At the time alluded to, Mr. Knight resided in *Somers Town*, Mr. Mathews in *Lisle Street*—the former was an early riser, the latter the reverse, and was at the time I speak of, living *en garçon*, myself and Charles being out of town on a visit.

Naturally anxious about the successful production of his new piece, Mr. Knight required many conferences with his friend, and each morning visited him, always having to wait for his appearance in the breakfast-room—Mr. Mathews hurrying down, he would find Mr. Knight patiently seated on one side of the table, when he took the other, and made a hasty breakfast, earnest on the subject of their meeting, without making any offer of sharing his morning meal with his visiter (who on the *first* occasion came with that view), Knight laughing in his sleeve at his friend's omission, and placing it to the right cause—namely, the absorbing interest which he took in the subject of their discussion—sat morning after morning watching the disappearance of mutton cutlets, tea and toast duly, without an attempt on the part of the host to make his visiter a participator in them. The next day and the next the same routine took place, the same friendly interest in his friend's success, but still on no "hospitable thoughts intent."

Mr. Knight's amusement increased by repetition,

“and grew by what it fed on” (or rather by what it did *not* feed on) and at length his anxiety became excessive, lest his friend should recollect his want of politeness, and atone for it—and after the first four or five times (and these calls amounted to seven or eight) if the visiter thought he perceived any indication of Mr. Mathews recollecting himself, he would rise abruptly, and take a hurried leave, tickling himself with delight that he had escaped the now dreaded hospitality which would deprive him of a good story against his friend, and he feared lest the pivot upon which it must turn, should be broken. But these visits terminated, and no word of hospitable courtesy was uttered by the absent host.

The time at length arrived when the merry little man’s revenge was ripe ; and during the rehearsals of the piece in question, he made the green-room resound with laughter at his graphic descriptions of his excellent breakfasts in Lisle Street, after his successive, long, morning walks. My Husband was in “amazement lost,” and full of shame—indeed, he could scarcely, at first, believe that he had really been capable of such neglect : but Mr. Knight so humorously described these flagrant omissions, that the culprit himself was as much amused as the rest of the listeners, at these recitals against himself. He nevertheless secretly resolved that his good-humoured little friend should not have all the joke to himself ; and actually sat up the greater part of one night in fabricating a series of consecutive invitations to breakfast, which were dated for every day, prospectively,

for a year, and couched in every variety of form and language that ingenuity and custom could devise and warrant. This task was not a trifle to a busy man, and shows what a true *joker* will effect, rather than forego his joke.

Cards, notes, letters, were so distributed, that poor Mr. Knight received them at all hours and in all seasons and places. By post, by messenger, by friends, under every circumstance—private or professional—the victim was perpetually haunted by this literary “Bill Jones.” If upon the stage a letter required to be delivered, *in character*, to him—on opening it, he read, instead of the expected contents, something like the following:—

“ My dear KNIGHT —

“ I do not know whether you ever eat your breakfast from home: if you do, *pray* gratify me by taking an early one with me, *tête-à-tête*, to-morrow morning, the 8th. I want to talk to you about your forthcoming farce. Will seven o'clock be too early?—for I am always stirring with the lark. The bearer waits for your reply.

“ Thine ever,

“ To Edward Knight, Esq.”

“ C. MATHEWS.”

If Mr. Knight dined out, before he could swallow his soup, a *note* would be handed to him, which required an *immediate answer*, on pressing business.

“ Mr. Mathews presents his best compliments to Mr. Knight, expects a few friends to *breakfast* with him to-morrow morning, the 9th, and hopes Mr. K. will consent to meet them. If he has no objection to leaving home so soon as six (Mr. Mathews being an early riser), Mr. M. will feel much honoured by Mr. Knight's company. A verbal answer by bearer will suffice.”



If, after a late evening's performance, the wearied actor felt inclined to indulge the next morning in a half-hour's additional slumber, he was sure to be roused from his pillow by a dispatch, portending matter of deep interest, and headed "*Private and confidential*," under the "*Immediate*." And rubbing his eyes open, they would be refreshed by—

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—

"You have never yet visited me in Lisle Street, where I am now living *en garçon*, and I really shall be flattered by your breakfasting with me any morning that you feel inclined to take so long a walk, fasting. *I shall prefer the 10th* to any other day.

"P.S. Coffee, tea, and cutlets, on table precisely at seven o'clock.

"Yours, &c.

"C. MATHEWS."

If in the act of shaving, an envelope containing an extra-sized card, must be opened, *without delay*, and presented the usual *formula* of a *dejeûner à la fourchette*, on the 11th of the month. Whether stepping into a bed or into a carriage, his progress was sure to be arrested by an urgent messenger, who brought a letter of *immediate import*, and who would not go away without a reply forthwith. If hastening to a rehearsal, a ragged little Mercury "with winged feet," would be seen flying after him, whose shrill cry would produce repeated "*Holas !*" or those startling "*Heys !*" which make one's nerves to quiver when heard, arresting our own, or another's progress in the open air, and "Stop, Sir, stop !" from disinterested passengers ; while

sometimes his name, pronounced distinctly, would enforce his attention, and give him pause, until the messenger overtook him with his paper mission. Sometimes, sitting in a box at the theatre, the box-keeper might be seen making his way to Mr. Knight with a letter, which "a gentleman in the lobby had requested might be delivered promptly, and begging a verbal reply;" — while innumerable double-knocks in the course of every day told of Mr. Mathews's purposed hospitalities, and Mr. Knight's door-bell was nearly wrung out of its socket with announcements of the numerous maternal entertainments of his friend, with which his writing-table was covered. No matter where, or how engaged, these missives found their way into his hand; and at length the sight of a newly-folded letter threw the recipient into a convulsion of laughter, for this absurd persecution never relaxed, until the three hundred and sixty-five invitations were duly delivered.

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## KNIGHT TRAVELLING.

MR. KNIGHT was not one of those who affect a popular disdain of

"The Art which taught them first to rise,"

Although they do not despise the advantages accru-

ing from it; he had too much sense and good feeling to

“Mud the fountain that gave drink to him,”

And cast a slur upon the profession from which he derived his bread. On the contrary, Mr. Knight was somewhat proud of being a popular actor; never having found his character deteriorated as an honourable man by having read Shakspeare attentively, and represented the morals of life to the ear as well as to the eye of the public.

Every body (theatrical) knows that Mr. Knight performed at Drury Lane Theatre, from which, like other actors of eminence, he made occasional excursions to provincial theatres. He had, as we have said, no objection to all the world knowing him to be an actor, but, in order to avoid an ostentatious display of the fact out of time and place, yet finding it expedient to secure his property from any accidental exchange with any other traveller of similar name upon the road, he caused to be engraved upon a brass plate, affixed to each of his trunks, his name, *Mr. Edward Knight*, written in full, followed by the Roman capitals—“T. R. D. L.”—the initials of the theatre to which he belonged in London.

He had left town in a night-coach, and at the close of his journey the next day, he was naturally eager to see his luggage safely delivered to him.

The guard of the coach, who had travelled all the

way, was now very assiduous in handing from the roof of the vehicle the several trunks belonging to Mr. Knight, and, as he did so, inspected, with pointed attention, the inscription on the brass plates, and having deposited the property at the feet of its owner, the man, hat in hand, awaited his fee with more than customary deference and respect, while Mr. Knight deliberately took from his purse what he deemed a sufficient remuneration for his services, and placed it in the hand of the expectant guard, who bowed his thanks; but the next moment, looking at the amount of the gratuity which laid exposed in his open palm, and then at Mr. Knight, he turned from him as he pocketed the money—evidently less than expected—with an insolent scowl and a significant glance at the brass plates (which had, no doubt, conveyed to him an idea of some honorary title of distinction), he walked away loudly uttering, in a contemptuous tone, and with a binding oath, the galling sneer of

“*You a T. R. D. L.!!! You’re as much a T. R. D. L. as I am!*”

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## DODD.

MR. DODD, the *High, Red-heeled-stage-dandy* of the old school of comedy, was (like the generality of the actors of his day) a very pompous man, and cherished no mean estimate of the dignity of human nature, and especially of his professional occupation. Indeed, he obviously *piqued* himself upon his talents and quality as an actor, and considered his reputation in those positions entitled to as much respect as his private virtues. In short—he valued the means by which he existed almost as highly as he did existence itself.

Mr. Dodd's general demeanour, and dignity of deportment off, as well as on, the stage, together with his rotund person was ably supported upon two short though well-formed legs, always elegantly covered with silk stockings, and his feet with Spanish leather shoes, secured by costly buckles. His hair *bien poudré*, the *queue* of which was folded curiously into a sort of knocker, which fell below the collar of, oft-times, a *scarlet* coat. The little man, in short, was a decided *fop* of his day, both off and on the stage.\*

Some (now forgotten) casualty had placed a man under Mr. Dodd's notice, who was employed by the servants to sweep the chimneys. He was a pains-

\* Mr. Dodd generally performed the *Lord Foppington's* of the drama.

taking workman, and almost as proud of his shovel and brush as Mr. Dodd of the buskin and sock ; in fact, he took a praiseworthy delight in his calling.

It fell upon a day that one of this chimney-sweeper's children—a boy of about eight or ten years of age, who, it afterwards appeared, had from his earliest hour manifested a reluctance to “climb betimes,” and had been heretofore thrust, against his will, into his father's dark transactions. This poor lad, on the day in question, exhibited a horror of ascending a particular flue—which was found on trial, too narrow for his growing size, and the distress of his position was communicated to the master of the house, who humanely interfered to extricate the poor creature from his perilous situation, and afterwards questioning the father of the sufferer, he was informed that of all his children, this one, only, was found impracticable in his family occupation—and refused to get his living (*he* called it his *livelihood*” (!) — as his brothers did — and the man, having no other means as he said of “*perviding*” for the refractory scion of his house, professed himself at a loss what to do with this “unnatratl piece of ooman natur”—as he scrupled not to call him.

Mr. Dodd feeling for both parties, proposed to take the tasteless urchin into his kitchen to assist the servants in knife-cleaning, errand-running, &c. until something better could be done for him—the offer was gladly accepted, not only by the lad, but by his father—who expressed a hope, that though “Bob was unsooted to *his* employ,” that he would

be suited to that of Mr. Dodd. Poor "*Bob*" having completely washed his hands of chimney-sweeping, acquitted himself so well in his new service, that after a year or so his kind patron exalted him to the dignity of his theatre-attendant in ordinary—and the diminutive "*Bob*" very speedily grew into a full-length *Robert*—a very intelligent stripling, and became under able instruction, a very efficient *stage-dresser*, and, moreover, a general favourite.

One Sunday, when Mr. Dodd returned home from church, he found Robert's father—whom he did not at first recognize—his identity being very much obscured by clean linen, and a fair complexion; appearing, in effect, clean, an altered man! The worthy sweep, after much hesitation, informed Mr. Dodd, that he was under the painful necessity of taking *Bob* back again to *Paradise Row* (the romantic *locale* of his own residence); at the same time assuring "his honour" that he did so with much regret, as Mr. Dodd had been so great a friend to his son—but, that he felt it no less than his "*dooty*," and upon that he acted.

Mr. Dodd surprised, and somewhat displeased at such an unlooked for intimation—demanded rather severely the cause of the father's so sudden and extraordinary desire to remove his son from a situation so clearly advantageous.

The master-sweep shook his head, and looked embarrassed. He had, he said, higher views for his son, and he hoped that, "as *Bob* had now arrived at

'ears of discretion, he would not refuse to listen to his fond parents' desire." Well, not to make the bridge wider than the flood, Mr. Dodd, after much trouble, elicited from the fond father the nature of "the higher views" to which poor Robert was to be raised, and found that such views were to be derived from the chimney-top, notwithstanding Mr. Dodd's kind endeavour to rescue the poor fellow from such prospective elevation, and, after a little further questioning, the sweep proceeded to disclose himself something in the following fashion :—

" Vy, your honour, if I *must* tell the truth, I 'opes it von't give no 'fence, and that you'll make allowance for the feelings of a *father*, but Bob's mother an' I 'ave been *werry* oneasy in our minds for a long time about our poor boy" (and here the worthy sweep brushed away a paternal tear). " It was a *sewere* blow, as *your honour may werry well suppose*, ven we found the lad *hadworse* to a *honourable*, an' vot I may call, a *nattral persoot* (it having been mine an' my *hancestors* that vas born afore me), and though yer honer 'as been werry kind to Bob, his *hanxious* mother 'as never bin vat I calls '*appy*, since he refused to go up the chimley for good, an' 'eld 'is 'ead above it ; an' poor ooman, ven she sees him—day arter day—come afore her vith clean 'ands an' face, her werry 'art natt'rally aches within her. She says its quite *contrary* to natur, an' onlike her other childern, vich is true enough. Vel, latterly, the poor ooman 'as fretted more an' more, an' ve have



canwersed the job in our chimley corner, hover an' hover agin, but can't smother our conwictions no how; ve have consultated with friends in hour hown line, an' ve have come to the conclusiveness in the end, that, has poor but honest parents, it his our bounding dooty to bind the lad to 'is first horiginal perfession afore it his too late, and put him up the chimbly agin vether it soots him or no, an' vonce there, he shall *stick to* it for life, for he may then talk till he's black in the face afore ve halters our 'termination."

"Well, but," asked Mr. Dodd, who could not, even now, see the jet of the chimney-sweeper's proceeding, "but why, after you have suffered the poor fellow to pursue another mode of life so long, do you wish to force him back into a trade he so much dislikes. Are you dissatisfied with the wages I give him, or with my general treatment."

"Werry far from *that*," replied the man with a sigh, "but—"

"But what?" pursued the actor. "I insist upon your stating your objections, to Robert continuing in my service."

"Vel, then," replied the much-perplexed sweep, "if your Honour *insists*, and I *must* vound your Honour's feelings, I 'opes you'll forgive me, since you vill 'ave the 'ole truth. Vell, then, ve, hour-selves, hand the rest of our *w*aluable co-nexions, feel conwinned that hour poor Bob *vill*, some night or another, take a fancy to git up upon the stage an'

*hact.* An' if he vas *vonce* to disgrace his family by sich a low *hoccupation*, his poor mother would never 'old up her 'ead agin *has long has* she lived."

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## TALMA.

IN the summer of 1817—the year when chimney-top bonnets, surmounted by huge boughpots of many-coloured flowers, were imported to England by the French ladies, and attracted daily crowds of wondering spectators, when one was visible, on the *Brunet* side of Leicester Square—Talma, the great French tragedian, visited London, and, *of course*, the *Theatres*, which form a portion of a Frenchman's daily bread, and are as requisite to his after-dinner enjoyment as the Englishman's "glass of wine."

Consequently, on the first evening of Monsieur Talma's arrival, he presented himself at the dress-entrance of Covent Garden Theatre, with Madame Talma upon his arm—her hair *à la Chinoise*, and her head encumbered with one of the aforesaid monstrosities.

The box-keeper, after the first glance of involuntary wonder at this prodigious novelty, proceeded to acquaint the applicants for seats, that the formidable

floral pyramid in question must be removed before he could admit the lady into the box, as no *bonnets* were allowed to be worn in that part of the theatre. Talma—much offended at an interference, the propriety of which he could not at all comprehend—vehemently resisted the box-keeper's authority, and declared, in his best English, “*Dat de Laidy most seet wis hare att on ;*” at the same time demanding to know what could be the objection ?

The man endeavoured to make Monsieur understand that a *bonnet* was not considered “full dress” in England, and that the regulations of the theatre positively forbade any lady in a morning dress being admitted into the lower circle of boxes ; finally recommending Talma to take the lady to an upper tier.

Talma's anger augmented, at what he considered a disrespectful and improper proposal.

“What do you min, Sare ?” he exclaimed. “*De Laidy sall not go up stair. Ees not hare bonnet a ansome bonnet ?—a Laidy's bonnet ?*”

“Very true, Sir,” urged the man ; “but it is not fit for the dress-boxes :—it is a *chip* bonnet.”

At the word *chip* Talma's ire redoubled, and he became furious, reiterating indignantly the word—

“*Chip ! chip ! chip !* How daire you say it is a *chip* bonnet ? How should you know, Sare, if it is chip ? I tell you, Sare, it is *not chip* ; and I will report your insolence to Mr. Kembel directly.”

With this threat the Emperor of the French

Stage took Madame Talma, *and her bonnet*, round to the stage-door, where, obtaining access to Mr. Kemble's room, he entered upon an account of the insult they had received from one of the servants of the theatre, to which his friend listened in the utmost bewilderment ; and a most whimsical *equivoque* followed, the mystery of which was at length unravelled by the, at first, puzzled umpire, who ultimately discovered that Talma's imperfect knowledge of the English language had led him into a misconception of the box-keeper's meaning when he described the bonnet as *chip*, which Talma's own pronunciation of the word had suggested to him to mean "*cheap*!" (*i. e. common, vulgar, &c.*)

Mr. Kemble soon succeeded in making his friend comprehend the box-keeper's meaning, and also the propriety of the man's refusal to admit Madame's huge head-dress. Talma laughed heartily at his own blunder, and returned to the box in restored good-humour, previously, however, inducing Madame Talma to leave her *cheap* bonnet (which doubtless cost four or five Napoleons) in the Green Room, to be examined, and wondered at, by all beholders, for its height and capacity.

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## MRS. JORDAN AND MISS POPE.

AT one period, during their later years, those inimitable actresses Mrs. Jordan and Miss Pope, had some green-room misunderstanding, and it followed, that what is called a *coolness*—but which in most cases may be better described as a *warmth*, subsisted between them,—and occasioned them to meet day after day, night after night in their professional avocations, without any other apparent notice of each other, than the business of the stage demanded.

At that time, ladies wore wigs instead of their own hair, and this unnatural fashion was adopted even by youth, which confined its own beautiful tresses, under an artificial mass of stiff formality. But it was one thing to adopt the fashion to the head—and another to *adapt* the head to the fashion, although this may at first appear a distinction without a difference.—*N'importe*.

Mrs. Jordan was in the full lustre of her prime, Miss Pope some few lustres beyond it;—yet both wore brown hair, without a shade of difference between that of *Miss Prue*, and *Mrs. Frail*, the characters which on the present occasion, called forth the exquisite talents of these two inimitable actresses.

In the course of the evening, the fair enemies

were seated—not *together*, of course—but on opposite seats, both, however, listening with equal enjoyment, to a story relating by Mr. Bannister, the “*Ben*” of the evening—when the concluding point touching the merry vein of Miss Pope, she suddenly threw back her head, while resigning herself to the burst of laughter elicited by the humorous recital, and whether, from the jerk of her so sudden movement, or from the top-heaviness of the ornaments upon her wig—before she, herself, could be aware of it, Miss Pope’s head was left uncovered—*literally* so, for not one hair was apparent; (*tout à fait Pélé!*) But only the quicksighted had time to observe the accident,—for Mrs. Jordan, forgetful of all distance between her, and her ancient friend, sprung forward with the impulsive kindness of womanhood to a sister in distress,—exclaiming, in her hearty voice,—“My *dear-r* Miss Pope!” threw herself so skilfully upon the old lady’s shoulders, as to exclude all view of the denuded part, while she dexterously caught up the treacherous wig, and replaced it upon the

“High top, bald with dry antiquity,”

to the relief of her agitated enemy, who, in return, threw her arms gratefully and affectionately round Mrs. Jordan’s neck, giving her a loving kiss, and a hearty “*God bless you!*”

Thus the wig and the difference, were happily adjusted at the same moment.

## HENRY SIDDONS AND MATHEWS.

SIR WALTER SCOTT, in the course of his *Diary*, relates an amusing and characteristic instance of the imperturbable personal dignity of John Kemble—that last of all the Romans!—which exhibited itself during the tragedian's excursion with the *Great Unknown* to the Vale of Ettrick, when an unexpected impediment presented itself, in the shape of a rivulet, which recent rains had swelled into a temporary river, and which the travellers were pressingly instigated to ford, by the rapid approach of a furious bull. Mr. Kemble's deliberate haste to remove himself from the threatened danger, his slow alacrity and stately step,—the constitutional measure of the Kemble locomotion,—resembled, in cause and effect, a similar dilemma, in which his nephew, Mr. Henry Siddons, was involved some years ago.

Mr. Siddons and my Husband were friends, and at one period neighbours,—the former living in Museum Street, Bloomsbury, and the latter opposite to the British Museum. Mr. Mathews was much attached to Harry, and out of pure regard would condemn himself to his friend's pace, which was almost painful to his natural speed (not then being a lame man), on their daily return to their respective homes, after a morning's rehearsal at Drury Lane Theatre, to which they both belonged.

One very warm day, at nearly the close of the season, these companions in arms were proceeding, side by side, leisurely up Drury Lane,—Mr. Siddons in his wonted position, namely, his left elbow resting upon his hip, his right arm stretched forward, the hand meeting that on the left with an action which might have led a stranger to believe him strenuously endeavouring to crack a refractory nut between his palms,—his striking and regular features being at the same time distorted by a nervous habit, which he had acquired when not speaking, of drawing his mouth on one side, and making a clicking, metallic noise in his cheek.

The friends had just crossed over into Museum Street, when suddenly a cry was raised that a mad dog was in the rear; which intimation caused the mercurial Mathews to look back, when, seeing a poor hunted spaniel running at full speed, and rapidly approaching, he promptly made his unconscious friend aware of the peril, and urged the necessity of immediate flight, at the same time setting an example of personal activity, by running a few yards forward, and nimbly ascending the steps of an open shop. In the next moment he was in security, and anxious for his friend, whom he beheld nearly on the same spot upon which he had left him, obviously in a state of great alarm, and executing a more energetic pressure of his hands, while the action of his cheek had become visibly more emphatic, his previously serene brow was



anxiously contracted, and it was altogether apparent that the whole of his frame was in a state of excessive trepidation, and equally clear that he was under the impression that he was practising great muscular exertion to reach the goal of safety,—such was his air of serious haste. At length, however, his efforts, slow and laborious as they were, brought him to the foot of the steps; when, by a deliberate ascent, he reached the top just in time, by good luck, to avoid the foaming animal, which immediately passed, followed by the hootings and peltings of the pitiless mob, whose brutal pursuit had probably first terrified, and then exasperated, the poor creature into madness.

Mr. Siddons looked excessively pale. With his lips quivering, and his whole form in agitation, he stood in his usual attitude, but without the power to give due force to the accompanying *click* in his cheek. As the rabid animal ran wildly on, all present were thankful for their escape; and Mr. Siddons could not refuse an honest tribute to his own, imaginary powers of locomotion. Turning to his friend, with an air expressive of his belief that he owed his safety to his own great celerity of limb, and with self-gratulation on his prompt exertions, in tones measured as his steps, he observed, with *naïveté*, to his amused friend, “Gad, sir! it was *time to run!*”

## CLAREMONT AND JOHN KEMBLE.

Who ever heard of Claremont—"Clary" (and not to have known him, playgoers, would argue yourselves unknown)—whoever heard of him, without at the same time hearing of his Narcissus-like devotion to unmatched perfection ; for, like Narcissus,

"None but *himself* could be his parallel ;"

—and eke, his convinced mind, that no earthly woman could look upon him without admiration, or man without envy ! Hail to thee, Claremont, of happy memory ! renowned "emperor of the Cockonians !" (before the immortal amateur, Coates, strutted and crowed his hour upon the stage) and, time out of mind, the stock-nonentity of Covent Garden Theatre ! Clary ! where have we seen thy fellow ? Who is like unto thee, thou most inoffensive and amiable of coxcombs ? Who ever adjusted his own neckcloth, either on or off the stage, with so perfect a conviction that it was *not* "a failure ?" Who ever glanced at his own curves in the green-room glass of fashion with so positive a consciousness that it reflected the "mould of form ;" and, above all, whoever heard of his disgracing himself or his calling by an ungentlemanlike or unworthy action ; or, in truth, doing any thing in this wicked

world worse than the Marquis Almanza, in the *Child of Nature*,—a misdemeanor for which he was condemned by the simultaneous voices of his judges upon the spot, on the night of the first appearance of the present Countess of Harrington (then Miss Foote)?—A great injustice to the play-going public; for no after-representative of that mature lover ever gave so much genuine entertainment to his audience. But to resume.

Who, we boldly demand, ever witnessed Claremont's Guildenstern without feeling satisfied that he ought to have performed Hamlet? or seen him in the noble County Paris, without perceiving in every look, tone, and gesture, that there stood, walked, and talked, the natural representative of Romeo? It was next to impossible to look at Claremont at such times without catching from his general bearing (notwithstanding his admirable self-complacency) the tacit assertion, that he was an ill-used gentleman. Indeed, the managers had much to answer for to the public in general, when they overlooked such *self-evident* merit. It may be said, that Claremont always stood in the drama's ranks in the position that the unlucky Irishman was said to stand, in relation to his inherited estate. which he averred was *kept from him by its right owner!* On similar grounds it was manifest to every nice observer, that Claremont would have had a born right to play Coriolanus, if he had not been *thrust out of the part* by John Kemble. Who,

once more we ask, ever saw "Clary" sent on as a substitute for some more *fortunate* actor, without imbibing from his manner the conviction that *he*, Claremont, was *the* actor, *par excellence*, of a part lawfully his property, were he not, as aforesaid, kept out of it by the "*right owner*?"

As an evidence that the foregoing judgment is correct, take the following fact :—

It is certain that Claremont's gentlemanlike manners and conduct recommended him to every body that knew him ; and Mr. John Kemble, who was kind and affable even to the lowest person in the theatre, was particularly gracious to one who, though his little foibles might sometimes cause a smile, was universally respected. At the beginning of one season, on the first night of Mr. Kemble's appearance, Claremont addressed the great tragedian in respectful inquiry after his health, and was answered—

"I'm *very* well, I thank you, Claremont ; I hope *you're* well."

Claremont, with one of his ineffable smiles, assured Mr. Kemble that he also was well, "notwithstanding the *great fatigue* he had undergone during the summer."

"Ha ! my good friend," asked glorious John, "what may you have been about, to occasion such fatigue?"

"Why, Sir," answered Clary, with an additional shrug to his usually important air, "I have been

acting *your* line of character, Mr. Kemble ; and with very great success, I assure you."

" *Indeed !*" said Kemble, dryly, at the same time taking a pinch of snuff, after something like a *start*, " *that must* have been *fatiguing* indeed, Claremont ! Pray, my good fellow, how did you do it ?"

" Why, Sir ?" responded Clary, nothing daunted by the half-sarcastic tone of the querist : " I *began* with Macbeth, which I played twice at ——." (Kemble here retreated a step or so, as if surprised.) " I say, Mr. Kemble, I played Macbeth *twice* at ——."

On this reiteration, Kemble's face relaxed into a good-humoured smile, and patting Clary upon the shoulder with an incredulous action, exclaimed—

" What ! twice in *one town*, Claremont ?"

This might be *envy* ; *certes*, there is nothing to prove that Kemble ever resigned the character of Macbeth into Claremont's hands ; while, to the last of the dramatic career of these contemporaries, the former obstinately retained the character of Hamlet, whilst Clary continued to perform that of Guildenstern, and with his usual success.

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## CHERRY.

MR. CHERRY, the Comedian, was a worthy and a clever man, yet, like many other clever and worthy men, irritable withal. He was, moreover, very smart at *impromptu*, and often witty.

During his early days, in one of the provinces, he was performing Autolycus, in the *Winter's Tale*, in which character he had to remark—with an expressive action of his finger upon his forehead—

“The King is a very good man, but—he wants it *here* !”

The unlettered part of the audience, who knew no distinction of date or place, but viewed the whole world as *England*, and knew nothing of *time* but time *present*, construed the above speech into rank treason, and the demi-gods, brim-full of British loyalty, hurled upon the devoted head of the actor their loudest thunder, precluding the continuation of the play, until the better portion of the auditors exerted their influence over “the poorer born,” and succeeded in producing a temporary calm.

The offender, who was, like Grumio,

“A little pot, and soon hot,”

could not control his irritation, at the gross stupidity of those on high, and Cherry bounced for-

ward, his eyes significantly directed to those he was about to address (who doubtless expected an abject concession and apology from the culprit who had so offended "ears polite"), and with an emphasis of anger and contempt exclaimed—

"It's the King of *Sardinia*—ye *Pumps* !"

This *polite explanation* amused the better-informed portion of the audience, but was, evidently, not mistaken for a compliment by the parties *named*, to whom it gave another handle for pouring forth a fresh flood of indignation, which now fell in torrents upon the overwhelmed delinquent, who having pumped his own anger dry, resolved to receive with patience and forbearance the whole tide of popular displeasure. His resolution was immediately put to the test, for, as if to show him that the "*pumps*" were not without *suckers*, one of the most thin-skinned among them aimed a large orange, with such precision, that it struck violently upon the chest of the actor.

This outrage, for a moment, seemed to cool the waters of their wrath, and to occasion a general stagnation. A dead silence ensued, which gave Cherry the advantage, for he quickly and meekly picked up the fruit of his indiscretion, and after examining it for an instant, pithily observed—

"This is not a *Civil* (Seville) Orange !"

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## MATHEWS AND SPRING.\*

MR. SAMUEL SPRING was what is termed a *character*,—one in which the elements of shrewdness and simplicity were happily commixed. In his earlier years he had laid a pretty solid foundation for after-wealth, during his position as head waiter in a leading club-house in St. James's Street, where, it was honourably noted, he distained to truckle even to the highest in the land when truth was in question. On one occasion, having been present while a charge against an absent member was uttered by a certain great personage, who thought fit to disclaim it when taxed by the injured party, "Sam" was appealed to as an evidence to disprove the fact of such words as those imputed having been spoken; when Spring, uninfluenced by the rank of the offending party, and unmindful of the probable consequences to himself, without a moment's hesitation, in answer to his patron's leading question of, "I *didn't* say so, *did* I, Sam?" replied, "Indeed, your H—h—ss, *you did*." Spring was usually humility itself; but, being a favourite, he was rather spoiled by the *habitués* of the club, and would sometimes forget himself, and become too presuming upon the condescension of the great. Once, very early in the year, accosting

\* Formerly box-book-keeper of Drury Lane Theatre.



William IV. (then Duke of Clarence , it may be presumed rather unseasonably, Sam drew upon himself from good-humoured royalty the reiterated cognomination of "*Forward Spring — Forward Spring !*" which adhered to him even in the autumn of his days.

Several years before the destruction of Drury Lane Theatre by fire, Spring was established as box-book-keeper of that house ; and, like all such theatre-appendages, he was a most devoted and loyal adherent to the particular *concern* to which he belonged. He was, in fact, nothing less than part and parcel of the building, a corner of which his exertions assisted to uphold ; and in his estimation, every event within or about the edifice was a matter of vital import, to which the rise or fall of nations would have been a secondary and puny consideration. Indeed, Spring placed an almost religious reliance upon a high and superintending care, which especially protected the interests of his particular theatre, the superiority of which he opposed to the rival one with all the ardour and fiery hatred of a Capulet for a Montague. It was not enough that Drury Lane flourished, Covent Garden must be in ruins, or it was but half a victory gained. The writer of this account has some recollection of a story told long ago of the former Lord North and Mr. Rigby, the comptroller of customs. They were, one day, engaged in official examination of a huge-bodied wealthy contractor ; who, being questioned by Lord

North as to his general prosperity, the well-to-do man replied by saying that he had nothing to complain of, for "that Providence had kindly assisted him in all his undertakings, and had never forsaken him for a moment." Which caused Rigby to observe with something like petulance as the burly mass of prosperity left the room, "Well, my lord! you see how Providence has been employed all this time! Instead of reducing your lordship's large stomach and curing my ring-worm, Providence has been attending to the affairs of this fat-headed contractor." Mr. Samuel Spring cherished a similar impression as to the partial and presiding influence over the interests of "his house," and he watched with the most vigilant and jealous eye every threatened innovation of its exclusive rights. One night he entered, with unusual animation, the green-room of Drury, having just witnessed, at the rival establishment, the condemnation of a new piece, and, addressing Mr. Wroughton, the then acting manager, with a triumphant air, and the sly, habitual touch of his hat, said in his tone of quaint humility,—"Beg Pardon, Sir. I come to tell you that Providence has been very kind to us to night at *the Garden*. New play, Sir, *quite damned*; not even attempted to be given out, Sir, for another night! Providence takes care of *the Lane*, Sir!"

My Husband was particularly fond of strengthening this local reliance, and encouraged and drew out

this and other amusing features in Spring's character with most surprising felicity. Spring was flattered at the attention paid to him by the actor, and opened to him on all occasions most kindly his peculiar feelings and opinions upon various matters. Amongst other delusions, Spring had acquired an excessive faith in Mr. Mathews's infallibility in all things connected with his mental faculties ; and the actor, discovering this, was always saying or doing something (previously contrived) that ensured the increasing wonder and reliance upon the gifted powers of the comedian, first revealed to Spring in his ventriloquy, which he was frequently practising upon the simplicity of the box-keeper, who at length gave him credit for any thing he chose to assume, whether mental or personal, possible or impossible. Amongst other results of this high opinion, he believed in him as a seer, and my Husband's (confederate) evidences of *second-sight* on several occasions had led Spring to regard him as a being gifted with even supernatural endowments. Such evidences of simplicity in a man not otherwise altogether simple, were very amusing, and, pre-determined as he was to look up to this wonder-working genius as capable of all things, it will not seem surprising that Spring was prepared to give implicit belief to all Mr. Mathews said or did, and to place even the most natural and common effects to the most extraordinary sources.

After the burning down of the two great patent theatres, the Drury Lane company acted at the

Lyceum ; and in 1810 an opera was performing there in which Braham sung a very popular song, called the " Death of Nelson." My Husband, conversing one day with Lady Hamilton, was questioned by her as to the merits of the new opera, at the same time stating her intention of accompanying some friends of hers to the theatre that evening. Mr. Mathews considerably advised her ladyship to forego her intentions, explaining that there was a song in the piece, the subject of which he was sure would touch her feelings, and distress her very much.

Whether Lady Hamilton forgot this prudent warning, or whether she suffered her desire to listen to the hero's praise to overcome her apprehension of the result, or from whatever cause, it so fell out that Mr. Mathews perceived the lady duly seated in a private-box with her little adopted, Horatia, at her side. It needed no ghost to tell him the scene that would follow, and as soon, therefore, as he quitted the stage, seeing Spring, he thus addressed him, first taking out his watch and looking at it with a solemn and earnest expression of face : " Spring, I give you notice that in about twenty minutes past nine o'clock " (the usual period when the " Death of Nelson " occurred) " a large lady, now sitting in the stage-box opposite, *will be taken very ill* and require assistance : do not be out of the way on any account, but at the time mentioned be ready with a glass of water and a smelling-bottle, for she will be attacked with *a violent fit* at the

period I have mentioned." Spring looked into Mr. Mathew's face with a faint smile upon his lips, which immediately subsided into a thoughtful expression of countenance, and Mr. M. observed after this that he never stirred from the side-scene, but kept a constant watch upon the box pointed out to him. At length the critical period arrived; Braham began his song, and before the second verse finished, sobs and cries were heard all over the small theatre. Spring rushed into the green-room "pale as his shirt," and running up to the slab whereon the customary decanter of water stood, seized it with the glass, hastened away with it to the fatal box, exclaiming with an awe-struck voice as he hastily passed Mr. Mathews behind the scenes,—“ Oh, Sir, you *are* a conjuror! *The lady is in strong convulsions!*” Spring, who had not the most remote knowledge of the cause of the lady's illness, nor of the associations which occasioned such an effect, from that moment viewed this intimation as a crowning evidence of the supernatural power in the individual to seize upon coming events so as to cast their shadows before, and thenceforward Spring looked upon Mathews as a man superior to the usual order of Nature's journeywork, and entertained the profoundest faith in his faculty of forecast and his insight into things not open to the mental vision of less-gifted mortals.

## MEREDETH, THE SINGER.

THERE was, some years ago, an epidemic raging in Yorkshire for vocal performances of sacred music, not only at the opening of churches, but of every other building not strictly of a private nature. Every combination of brick and mortar, at its completion—in order to mark the interesting epoch, and, haply, immortalize at once the projector and builder of the edifice—was commemorated by a musical festival.

Mr. Meredith, the then-celebrated bass singer, had come from London to display his abilities in several parts of Yorkshire. He was extremely popular as a vocalist in that county, and universally sought after, upon the occasions mentioned.

This gentleman travelling from Leeds to Wakefield at the above period, in a stage-coach, the day after his performance at the former place, in order to fulfil an engagement that night at the latter, was accosted on the road, where the coach stopped for a few minutes to deliver some parcels, by a large, sleek, reputable-looking man who, abruptly opening the door of the vehicle, eagerly demanded—

“Pray, is there one Mister Meredith i’ t’ coich?”

“Yes,” replied the person named; “*I* am Mr. Meredith; what, pray, may you have to say to me?”

"Whoy," resumed the man, "I want t' engage thee, then, for a bit o' singing, loike, and should be glad to know when thou'lt be at liberty to perform for me?"

The answer being satisfactory as to time, and Mr. Meredeth's usual professional charge for an evening or a morning's exercise of his talents being understood, he begged the person, briefly, before the coach proceeded, to explain where, and on what occasion, his services were to be applied.

"Whoy, then," replied the singer's new patron, "Thou must know, oive joost built me a new *Mill*, and oive made up my moind t'open it wi' an *Oratorio*."

Mr. Meredeth, declining to bring grist to his own mill by such an exhibition of himself, and the coach driving on, the disappointed miller was left to bestow his patronage upon some less fastidious professor.

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#### JONES.

MR. RICHARD JONES, like the majority of stage-struck youths, had very high aspirings when he commenced acting. He was very young—*young* enough to believe he could represent the heroes of

tragedy,—and in fact *did*, strut and fret his hour upon a small stage, with a distant view of stalking in buskins on a large one. With these intentions, he had enrolled himself in a little provincial company (in Lancashire), on the understanding that he was to perform all the first-rate characters of Shakespeare, although he was unstudied but in two or three.

It so happened that *Hamlet* had not yet formed a portion of the young tragedian's acquisitions ; but that play being bespoke by some influential patrons of the theatre, not only was Jones called upon to be perfect *to order* in the youthful Dane, but the rest of the characters were obliged to be enacted by some other *spick and span new* performers, some of whom—as it will appear—were strangers even to the *plot* itself ! Among these worthies, the *Claudius* of the night, a perfect stick, was utterly unacquainted with any portion of the play, and to whom *a part* was presented ready *cut and dried*, wherein the *cues* only were set down to study from ; giving, of course, a very imperfect insight to the general text and point of his scenes.

Mr. S—— (a large heavy-headed, leaden-eyed man), who knew little more of the immortal Bard than the name, was sorely puzzled not only to suit the action to the word, but the *word* to the action ; and at the *one* rehearsal was too much absorbed by the *reading* of his own character, to take much more notice of



others than to listen for the *cues* to his own forthcoming speeches.

The anxious night arrived ; and the reader may form a near guess how the tragedy was acted, under all circumstances. The only surprising part of it was, how a novice—or even a more matured actor—could have made himself acquainted in a few days with the *words* of such a difficult part as *Hamlet* ; and this wonder must increase at the fact, that the youthful Jones was able to deliver them sensibly, and with a favourable effect.

Having reason to be pleased with the evening's result, in reference to his own share of it, Jones left the theatre in a tolerably satisfied state of mind, yet not altogether unaware that Mr. S——, the *Claudius* of the scene, had shown a sullenness towards him, throughout the latter portion of the play, not consistent with the guileful but politic King, and looked lowering upon him, while he (*Hamlet*) addressed him ; especially at the fall of the curtain, when the manager and other friendly spirits crowded round the young actor, with praises and congratulations upon his success in the noble Dane. Mr. Jones could not but notice, at this period, that *Claudius* had turned his back upon him, as if with an air of angry defiance, not to be accounted for, unless by attributing to him the vile passion of envy,—a not improbable feeling, considering that the King had once or twice received some slight indications of disapprobation when he substituted,

in place of Shakspeare, language more familiar to him, and which doubtless he deemed equally to the point, and therefore equally good.

Mr. Jones, the next morning, was roused by times, by "a gentleman," whose business would brook no delay; and hurrying his toilette, the young tragedian bustled into his breakfast-room, where he found seated, as if in state, a solemn, heavy-looking man, who informed Mr. Jones that he had something *serious* to say to him (it was easy to believe), and claimed his most attentive hearing.

The fact, he said, *was*, that Mr. S—— (the *Claudius* of the over-night) had deputed him (his particular friend) to wait upon Mr. Jones, in order to demand an apology for the previous night's insult; and as Mr. S—— felt himself publicly aggrieved, he thought that Mr. Jones's concession should not be otherwise than public also; for he must be fully aware of the injurious tendency of such behaviour in a town where Mr. S——'s character was his bread, and where, until Mr. Jones put forth an insinuation against it, he had lived several years with unblemished reputation, &c. &c.

Jones was amazed! His "soul was full of discord and dismay!" "What," he asked, "had he done to draw upon himself such an inculcation?" He declared that never, even in *thought*, had he entertained a desire, much less an intention, of giving offence to Mr. S——; and certainly at the time wherein he was charged with such commission,

he was too much engrossed by the task of the night, and the arduous character he was acting, to meditate or execute evil to that of another, private or public.

The friend of Claudius shook his head, Burleigh-fashion, and observed—"The fact was indubitable; Mr. Jones's meaning had been obvious to more than the individual himself, who, in other words, he assured him, was not made of 'stuff so flat and and dull that he could let his beard be shook with danger, and think it pastime.' Mr. Jones had grossly insulted Mr. S——, and owed him compensation, and compensation by *apology only* would be received."

Well, after a few windings, Mr. Jones at length, by a short cut, reached the pith and marrow of the offence.

It was, it appeared, "obvious" to Mr. S——, that Mr. Jones's tones, looks, and manner were so pointedly rude at different times of his performance—so totally uncalled for or justified by any thing on the part of Claudius, whose language to Hamlet is ever kind and affable—that they were calculated to leave an impression upon the audience very prejudicial to Mr. S——'s character, and if this was only suspicion in his earlier scenes, his behaviour in the latter ones, which, "like unto a murdering piece, in many places gave him superfluous wounds," was not to be mistaken, and the *malice prepense* was undoubted in the scene wherein

*Claudius* asks Hamlet where he has bestowed the dead body of the ancient Polonius, at which time Mr. Jones used an unjustifiable action which was not warranted by the author, and from which he carefully abstained at the rehearsal. This action occurred in the speech following the enquiry alluded to, namely—"Where is Polonius?" To which Hamlet replies—"In Heaven; send thither to see; if your messenger find him not there, seek him in *t'other* place yourself!" To which reply Mr. Jones gave a sinister turn of his own, by emphatically pointing with his finger *downward*, as if he wished it to be understood by the spectators that Mr. S——'s life had a tendency to a place not mentionable to ears polite. This was the aggression which Mr. S——'s friend was instructed to lay a stronger stress upon, waiving other points, although he was fully aware that Mr. Jones, throughout the performance, had shown a covert hostility to Mr. S——; but the instance just quoted was, he conceived, tangible and conclusive.

Mr. Jones, young as he was, had a full perception of the ludicrous, and felt highly amused at the absurdity of this solemn piece of ignorance and folly, and good-humouredly strove to explain to the friend of Claudius, that Hamlet and the King were *too much* of kin, and less than *kind*; in modern parlance, that they were in reality *not on good terms with each other*—but in vain; and tried to convince the pompous blockhead before him that, although Shakspeare had omitted any directions to

the actor to use the expressive action complained of, yet it was adopted invariably by every performer of Hamlet, and seemed traditional.

Vain and useless was all explanation. *Apology* was the word, and a public one indispensable to Mr. S——'s wounded honour, and at length Mr. Jones agreed to the terms, since nothing less would suffice to place him in peace with a man whom, in his professional pursuit, he must necessarily encounter every day and night ; but *he* had a condition, too, which *he also* insisted upon, namely, that in making this public atonement the *ground of offence* should at the same time be stated. To this the sapient friend of Claudius after a brief consideration, assented, and took his leave. But, from this moment, no further notice was taken of the affair by either party, and it was supposed that the matter must have been referred to some more discreet judgment (probably to the manager himself, who was brother to the offended party), who doubtless had advised the Ex-King of Denmark to proceed in this matter as he had with the body of Polonius, and "in hugger-mugger to inter" his deadly wrong, which was accordingly "quietly-inurned" in the *Tomb of all the Capulets*.\*

\* I had the pleasure of hearing Mr. Jones relate the above anecdote a few months since—when he was looking almost as young as when he last exhibited his sprightly and delightful talents upon the stage, which he quitted for a higher aim—having for some years devoted himself to the study of theology, and the tuition of pulpit-oratory.

## INCLEDON'S MADEIRA.

It is a common and inconsiderate remark, that such or such a person "is a vain man, and," therefore, "thinks of nothing but himself." This is by no means a just sequence ; for your vain man, if he be *really* vain, thinks and cares for as many things besides himself as may tend to contribute to the sustainment of his idol, and the meanest accessories thereunto become objects of even vital importance in his eyes. Vanity is a much more expansive foible than the utterer of the above remark imagines. It can find room for many things besides its essential self ; having an elastic faculty, an appetite which can take in to any amount whatever may be found aidant and conducive to its own existence. Vanity is a flambeau to a man's merit, which "shews itself, and shews his merit too." But, at the same time, it acts like the torch of the link-boy, which not only lights "his honour" over the kennel, but unavoidably throws its lambent flame over all lesser things following in its wake and within its influence. In like manner will the halo of self-sufficient brightness illumine every object under its rays.

It was related of Michael Kelly, as one of his Hibernicisms, that he accused Mr. Cherry, the comedian, of being the greatest egotist he knew, *because*

he was "always talking of his *wife and daughter*." Strained as the import of the word egotist obviously was in the foregoing use of it, there was more of truth and just meaning in Mr. Kelly's application than met the ear.

A vain man is not only vain of himself, but of all that appertains to self. His wife, his children, his household-stuff, his field, his barn, his ox, his horse, his ass, his man-servant, and his maid-servant, his cattle, and the stranger that is within his gates—yea, all that he inherits, or is by choice or chance made, for the time-being, a part of self and its surroundings, must of necessity be super-excellent, being *his*. When, therefore, such a man praises or talks of aught belonging to himself, he is strictly an egotist, for he cannot separate his extrinsic and fortuitous goods from his intrinsic personal goodness—his wide idea of self involves all that he has made his own, in the vast estimate of his personal excellence. Cherry, it seems, "was always talking of his wife and daughter," probably only because they were *Cherry's* wife and daughter.

Incedon was notoriously a vain man—an egotist in the most liberal and extended sense of the word. He talked, it is true, much, very much, of himself, and he also boasted of what externally belonged to him. But then his praise was not, in reality, of those persons or things—but of the incomparable "Charles Incedon!" through whose merits and glorious medium the merits of other objects shone.

Vanity was, in truth, the besetting sin of Incledon—the chief yet amusing abatement to his otherwise just and liberal character. In pronouncing his own name, he believed he described all that was admirable in human nature. It would happen, however, that this perpetual veneration of self laid him open to many effects which, to any man less securely locked and bolted in his own conceit, would have opened the doors to his understanding. But he had no room there for other than what it naturally contained; and the bump of content was all-sufficient to fill the otherwise aching void. Incledon called himself the “English Ballad-singer,” *per se*; a distinction he would not have exchanged for the highest in the realm of talent. Amongst many self-deceptions arising out of his one great foible, he was impressed with the belief that he was a reading man. My husband calling upon the ballad-singer\* one day to get a lesson of him by heart, found him poring profoundly over a book. As it was not a *music*-book, his visiter felt curious to learn the nature of his study, and inquired what he was reading. Incledon turned down upon its face the open page reverentially upon the table, and with a solemn expression of countenance replied, “My dear Matthews, I’m doing what every master of *a* family should do, improving my mind; and not only my mind, but my morals. I’m reading *a* book which

\* Mr. Incledon always pronounced the letter *a* very broad.



should be in the hands of every *father and husband*. My dear boy, I'll lend it you ; you're *a young man*, and will be the better for it all your life. My dear Mathews, it's the *Newgate Calendar* !”

Another day, walking with the same person, Incledon took him into a bookseller's shop ; and addressing the shopman, informed him that he wanted to purchase “ two feet of books.” The man looked surprised, and inquired what sort of books he should show him. “ My good man,” pompously replied Incledon, “ I've already told you that I want two feet of books : here's the measure. I shall require them to have handsome bindings ; but I'm not particular about their titles, so that they are not the same *as* those in *a* list I've brought. I should not like two of the same sort.”

The bookseller still looked perplexed, and glanced his eye first at his customer and then over the paper delivered to him ; during which time Mr. Mathews questioned Incledon as to his reason for buying books by rule and measurement ; when he explained that having recently purchased a very handsome bookcase which he had met with by chance, and placed therein all the volumes his house contained, he found a vacant space left on one of the shelves which he was anxious to fill up, and that he had ascertained the unsightly gap to be just two feet wide. But to return.

It had become a habit, during a very fagging run of a new opera at Covent Garden Theatre one season,

for certain performers to club a batch or so of Madeira, of which they occasionally took a glass in their dressing-rooms, in order to sustain their much exercised strength and spirits during those nights of unusual exertion. Incledon was one of the members of this club, and a very liberal partaker of the Madeira, which, nevertheless, he indulged in the abuse of, continually finding fault with its quality; and while he invariably swallowed two glasses, at least, to the one of any other person, he never failed to execrate its nauseous flavour.

As the close of the season drew near, his brother-performers, long wearied with Incledon's senseless and transparent folly upon this point, meditated some revenge upon his persevering discontent and continuous fault-finding of a wine which all knew to be excellent. Invariably, while underrating the Madeira in question, he boasted of his own wine, averring that what the club provided was not comparable with that he had in his cellar; that, in fact, theirs was trash, unfit for a gentleman's drinking, and not worth the rinsings of the glasses sent away from his table, &c. &c.

On the last night but one of the season, Incledon had been more than usually discontented with the Madeira of which he partook so largely,—still bragging of his own. While he sipped and sipped, he mingled with his sips the most violent execrations at its infamous quality; declaring, as glass after glass coursed rapidly down his throat, that he had the

utmost difficulty in swallowing the poisonous composition. The next night, one of the club perceiving a large key lying upon Incledon's dressing-table, with an iron label attached, upon which the word "*cellar*," was engraved, it struck the plotters that it was the "*open Sesame*" to the so-much-vaunted Madeira. And Incledon happening at the time to be engaged upon the stage until the close of the opera, the traitors despatched his dresser in a hackney-coach to Brompton Crescent with the precious key, and a message to Mrs. Incledon from her husband, requesting that she would send forthwith by the bearer (known by her to be his theatre-attendant) *one dozen of his best Madeira*. Mrs. Incledon, wholly unsuspecting of any trick — the delivery of the key being sufficient warranty for the genuineness of the order—caused the wine to be promptly delivered, and placed in the coach; and the dresser arrived at the theatre with it ere Incledon returned to his room. When there, it was formally announced to him, that in consequence of his continued distaste of the wine hitherto provided, which had been consumed to the last bottle, the club had procured a dozen of a superior quality, in order to gratify Incledon's fastidious taste; and as it was the last of the night season, they had invited two or three performers, not of the club, to partake of the treat; for the wine had been tasted by some unerring judges, and pronounced *unequalled* in its flavour. Incledon's self-conceit, it may be

imagined, was somewhat *piqued* by the declared existence of any wine *not his* "unequalled" in quality; and he looked grave and dissatisfied. His judgment thus appealed to was tenacious and deliberate. He poured out slowly a glass of the boasted wine, and held it up to the light with most critical examination; he then passed it under his nostrils, scrupulously repeating the operation several times, with an ominous shake of the head, which reminded all present of Lord Burleigh in the *Critic*; then putting a taste of the wine upon his tongue, and moving it about for a short interval before he swallowed it, and repeating again and again this last test, with a sudden shudder of disgust and contempt, he ultimately threw away the remaining drop from the defiled glass, protesting, with a vehement oath, that it was *stuff*, and not worth a shilling a bottle: in fact, "*Cape*—nothing but *Cape*," to which he pronounced the previous samples infinitely superior! His brethren expressed themselves "disappointed," and they were "sorry and vexed" that Mr. Incledon did not like the wine, which every other person lauded, and speedily disposed of. Incledon became sulky, having for consistency sake abstained from taking his share of the "execrable trash," and moodily prepared to return home.—One of the party, who all at once affected to agree with him in opinion of that night's wine, accompanying him thither, *self-invited*, for the professed purpose of tasting the "particular Madeira" so often vaunted

by its fortunate possessor. As they entered the supper-room, the master of the house put his hand into his pocket for the key of the cellar, which not finding, he expressed his fear that he had left it behind him in his stage-clothes ; but, on the instant, Mrs. Incledon smilingly produced it, observing that, “ in the haste of his messenger’s return to the theatre with the wine, she had omitted to send back the key.” “ What messenger ? what wine ? ” asked the astonished and alarmed husband. The whole matter was soon explained, and the boaster, more angry than humbled, was left by his visiter, the unpitied victim to his own vanity, justly sacrificed upon the altar he himself had erected.

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#### MATHEWS AND YATES.

IN the year 1829 my Husband and Mr. Yates, journeying together, stopped at a post-town which, in forgetfulness of its proper name, we will call *Tewkesbury*, and during the ceremony of changing horses, being desirous of performing as many miles as possible by daylight, and their dinner-halt being necessarily late,

the friends agreed upon the expediency of a slight refreshment before they proceeded further.

On alighting at the above post-house they were officiously attended by a little, fat, bald-headed waiter, who bustled before them into a room where he made them his best bow, and "hoped that *both* gentlemen were well," calling to their remembrance his having attended upon them a short time previously in another part of the country, hinting that he had not forgotten their liberality to him on that occasion. The travellers having gratified the little man by their obvious recollection of his services, desired him without loss of time, and with as little ceremony as possible, to bring in a tray with something cold to eat.

At this demand the manner of the little waiter underwent a considerable change, and the warmth

his welcome suddenly sunk below Zero, his face exhibiting at the same time an expression of concern. After a pause, during which his mind seemed agitated by a perplexed "What ought I to do?" his eye glanced at the open door of the room, which he immediately closed with the most delicate precaution, then tiptoe-ing his way back, as if his shoes were not deemed trustworthy, and might creak out their understanding of their wearer's underhand proceedings, he went close to the wondering visitors, placed his right hand edgewise against the left side of his mouth, and, in a scarce audible whisper

—doubtless having heard that *walls have ears*—into the porches of those of the travellers, which were wide open with curiosity, he poured a leprous distilment, the which I will transmit to my readers' eyes in its genuine colloquial substance.

I have said that, as soon as the hungry travellers called for something which might stay their appetites, for dinner, something unusual appeared in the manner and conduct of the waiter, who, after the precautionary evolutions described, thus accounted for the want of that prompt alacrity which generally follows similar intimations to one of his calling.

“Gentlemen,” said he “I hope you will pardon the liberty I take, but, if you will follow *my* advice, you will postpone your luncheon till you reach the next stage.”

*Mr. Mathews*—surprised, asked “Why so?”

*Waiter*—“Hush!” (putting his finger on his lips, pointing to the door, and looking unutterable things) “Because, Sir, there is nothing in *this* house that is fit for you to eat; it would be robbing you to make you pay for any thing *here*.”

*Mr. Yates*—“Well, but you don't mean—”

*Waiter*—“*Indeed*, Sir, I *do*. There is nothing a gentleman can swallow—kept too long—every bit *tainted*, I do assure you. It would be throwing away your money to call for any thing to eat.”

[Here the friendly waiter explained that the larder of the master he now *served*, was, at the best of times, ill provided, but that, at the present

moment, owing to the heat of the weather, its contents were *untouchable*.]

The travellers, *malgré* their craving appetites, smiled at each other, amused at such an eccentric deviation from the established "rule of the road." To find the waiter of an inn acknowledge any thing it contained to be less than perfection, was reversing the order and fitness of things. It was, however, not desirable to insist upon the production of eatables clearly not *edible*, and it was suggested by Mr. Mathews that some bread and a slice of butter might suffice; but their little adviser shook his head disapprovingly, and again whispered—

"By no means; 't wont *do*, Sir!—butter *rancid*; bread all baked in a *tin*; heavy as *lead*!"

"Oh, very well," replied Mathews, "let us have some biscuits; they can't be very objectionable."

"But," interposed Yates, before the man could offer a demurrer, "we shall want something to drink with such dry things. I'm dying of thirst as well as of hunger. I think, Mathews, some Sherry will be best."

Here the waiter abruptly cried out, as if somebody had pinched him—

"Oh, *don't!* Don't *think* of it, Sir! *Pray* dont!"

"What do you mean?" said Yates; "the *wine* hasn't been kept too long, I'll answer for it; *that* is not *tainted*. Bring in a pint of your best Sherry."



*Waiter*—(with an indignant sneer)—“*Sherry*, indeed! *Charge* you for *Sherry*; all *Cape*—not worth a shilling a bottle.”

“Well,” said my Husband, “since you ‘confess the *Cape*,’ what say you to your *Port*?”

*Waiter*—(with a shudder)—“Ugh! *Worse*. All *sloe-juice*—never saw *Oporto*.”

*Mr. Yates*—(tittering)—“Well, then, how’s your brandy?”

*Waiter*—“*British*, every drop! Burn your *inside* out!”

“*The Devil take it*,” said Mathews. “Well, I suppose you’ve some decent ale; let us have some of *that*.”

Here this Burleigh of waiters again shook his head with greater meaning than before, at the same time exhibiting an expression of face that might have belonged to King Agrippa, and uttering a spasmodic repetition of the word “*Ale!*” placed his hands significantly upon his lower stomach, with an accompanying shudder, which described an intimate experience of its *aigre* qualities.

“What?” asked *Mr. Yates* who was, by this time, in convulsions with suppressed laughter, “What! the *ale* bad, too?”

*Waiter*—(with another shudder)—“*Shocking!* Sour as *wargess!* Thunder-storm last week;—make you *ill!* Ugh!”

Highly amused at this mysterious friend’s several warnings—little less impressive than those of *Mr.*

Thrale, though not so *Entire*—my Husband at length, by way of final experiment, proposed that a decanter of cold water should supply the place of more doubtful liquids; at which suggestion, the conscientious waiter, with up-turned palms, and eye-balls protruded as if in amazement at the local ignorance which prompted this demand; and, in affected incredulity at such absence of information on so notorious a point; with a show of hydrophobial disgust, and an effort of breath which seemed to be dragging Truth itself from her Well, he exclaimed—

“*What!!—Tewkesbury Water!!!*”

This was the climax; and at that moment the chaise drawing up to the door, the uncheered travellers, putting a grateful “thank-you-for-nothing” fee into the hand of the purseey little waiter, recommenced their journey, and indulging in an unrestrained roar of laughter at the conduct of their conscientious and considerate friend, agreed, that though totally deficient in hospitality, the inn they had just quitted could not be said to be altogether destitute of *Entertainment*.

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## MATHEWS AT BRIGHTON.

OF a very different complexion from the aforesaid serving-man was "our Brother of York,"\* who some time after waited upon Mr. Mathews, while "taking his ease at his inn."

My Husband was a plain feeder, and often preferred the South-Down mutton to any other food, when it was to be had.

He had dined one day off a most excellent saddle of this mutton, and the joint became, for the time, his hobby; consequently having, the day after, invited a mutton-eating friend to dine with him, he ordered another saddle, which he begged might not be inferior to that of the previous day.

The waiter, who was a very promising young man (most waiters are), assured his patron that he might rely upon being supplied to his wish with "the dish whereon he loved to feed;" but as there are many slips between the cup and the lip—the stirrup and the ground—so this saddle proved more like a *halter* (which every body knows is the emblem of *toughness*); and at the first incision was proclaimed *all leather and prunella*, and neither of the friends thought of putting a bit into his mouth. Mr. Mathews reproached his attendant for not having attended to his instructions to pro-

\* The hotel at Brighton so called.

vide another saddle comparable in quality with that of the day before. The zealous waiter stoutly asserted his rigid obedience to the order, and expressed his *great surprise* that the saddle on table should prove inferior to the one of the previous day, adding, with his most polished bow—

“ I cannot understand how it *can be* ; for I saw it cut from the *very same sheep*, I do *assure* you, Sir !”

(“ Ferdinand Mendez Pinto was but a type of thee, thou liar of the first magnitude !”)

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## MASTER BETTY.

NAPOLÉON called England “ a nation of shop-keepers :” he might also have termed it *a country of imitators*. *Certes*, it is but to start any striking novelty, to see innumerable competitors, if not rivals, in the field, eager to share or supersede the glory of the original ; for of what can it be said that

“ Our tardy, apish nation  
Limps not after, in base imitation ?”

The “ Betty-Boy” was undoubtedly a child of precocious and marvellous power to imbibe dramatic instruction, and to repeat it faithfully. He

was withal handsome in face, and graceful in figure, and altogether an engaging and surprising youth. But the production of this pigmy prodigy, unfortunately gave birth to innumerable pigmy prodigies, and threatened "to people the whole (*dramatic*) realm with *Thumbs!*" But the *Miss Mudies*, and other little monstrosities of transient interest, strained public wonder till its eye-strings almost cracked, and asked for rest and refreshment. The Baby-bubble, blown too wide, naturally broke, and dispersed itself into thin air; surfeited with childish sweetmeats, the public palate was palled, and longed to return to more solid and attic food. Meanwhile the actors, whose matured efforts were wholly set aside, or made subservient to child's play, might be expected, with justice, to entertain some sullenness against their former patrons. Kemble and Cooke, although not forgotten, ceased to be talked of, or "run after," as of old, and the "Young Roscius" "bore upon his baby brow the round and top of sovereignty." He was *the fashion*; but, like all other fashions of this world, doomed to pass away.\*

\* The public looked at Betty in his boyhood through the magnifying end of fashion's fickle glass, and in his riper years viewed him through the other; in both they went to *extremes*. Mr. Betty wisely withdrew himself from public scrutiny into the narrow focus of private life, where he has never ceased to be regarded through the medium of affection; and it may be added, that albeit a sensible *man*,—in simplicity and goodness of heart he is still a *child*.

During the Lilliputian mania, many were the arrows discharged by Brobdignagian sarcasm at the tiny usurpers of their lawful territories. The full-grown children of Thespis, though not in arms, were much disgusted, when called before the public to nurse and uphold these bantlings of the day ; and all were ready to chorus Mrs. Jordan's half angry, half pleasant, outbreak at the multiplication of precocious babyhood—

“ Oh, for the days of King Herod !”

Indeed, if any thing could make one think favourably of that potentate, it would have been the nursery that London was made for these little offsets of humanity ; and it was *offensively* amusing (if such a term may be allowed) to listen to the enthusiastic ecstasies of the noble visitors who came nightly to the green-room to gaze upon the Boy-man, and haply to kiss the garment-hem of *the Betty*, who, had his person been feminine as his name, could not have had more fervent male adorers, some of whom were almost impious in their enthusiasm.\*

One evening, a silly lordling had the impertinent folly to ask John Kemble, who was performing at

\* I heard a great man one night declared his belief that the Boy was gifted by divine inspiration ; and added, that he expected to see the roof of the theatre open some night, and his spirit ascend through it.

the other house—"Whether he did not consider Master Betty the finest actor upon the stage?" To which *delicate* question glorious John—taking a pinch of snuff between his fingers, and raising it slowly to his nose—with great *sang froid* replied—"I have never, my lord, seen the young gentleman *play*."

On one never-to-be-forgotten night, Kemble and Cooke acted together *Othello* and *Iago*, and in their best style. It appeared, in effect, as though they had previously said to each other, "When pigmies pretend to form themselves into a body, it is time for us, who are men of figure, to look about us."

In fact, they acted so gloriously throughout, that they won back all straying souls, and at the close of the tragedy, in a transport of enthusiasm, gradually wrought to a climax by such masterly delineations, the audience simultaneously rose, and the popular shout of "*No more Boy's Play*" was echoed from all parts of the building—which spontaneous manifestation, was the first serious indication of a morbid excitement subsiding into a healthful and calm judgment

"*On revient toujours à ses premiers amours.*"

As for the *little Maid Mudie*, her feeble blossoming was nipped in the "*Bud*," and convinced that her *Gaucherie* was out of place in the metropolis, she carried her "*Country Girl*" to the provinces,

where her puny constitution and efforts perished rapidly from coldness, and died a natural death from neglect.

Miss Mudie's brief appearance in London acted as a mirror to the public—it reflected their folly, and showed them the fallacy of turning national theatres into Baby-houses.

As for John Kemble he, at length, became quite jocose upon the subject of child's play.

One evening, when the age of Miss Mudie was questioned, she having an antiquated looking face—a green-room wag observed, “that if she was *really* the *child* she was said to be, he must confess, he *never saw so young a body with so old a head.*”

At which, Mr. Kemble in his solemn and measured tone of jesting—sportively replied—

“*Child*, Sir!—Pooh, Pooh!—Why, Sir, when I was a very young actor in the York company, that little creature kept an inn at Tadcaster, and had a large family of children!” adding as he turned aside to indulge in his pinch of snuff—“You may rely upon this *fact*, and repeat it upon my authority.”

Elliston, himself, at that time partially a tragedian—had *his* humour too, upon these babes and sucklings of the drama, who pushed the regular professors from their stools,—and affected to cherish a reserve upon the subject, the which induced people to press for his opinions upon the merits of this *pin-basket* of Thespis, the “Young Roscius.”

“Sir,”—would Elliston, solemnly reply, in his



fine full toned voice, to one of these pesterers—at the same time assuming a mystical expression of face. “Sir, *my opinion* of that young gentleman’s talents will never transpire during my life. I have *written* my convictions down, they have been attested by competent witnesses, and sealed and deposited in the iron safe at my banker’s, to be drawn forth and opened with other important documents at my death. The world will *then* know what Mr. *Elliston* thought of *Master Betty*.”

During the first season of the “Young Roscius,” Mr. Stephen Kemble, then manager of the Durham and Newcastle Theatres, came up to London for the purpose of witnessing the boy’s performance. His letters to Mrs. Kemble were eagerly looked for by the actors, but she was shy and reluctant at revealing her husband’s particular opinions of the wonderful child, who was drawing all the world after him; but to Mr. Liston, who was an intimate and favourite visiter, Mrs. S. Kemble drew aside a portion of the managerial curtain, and allowed him to read a paragraph from one of Mr. S. Kemble’s letters, in which the writer confided to his wife his impression that the whole affair was, what he termed “*a Humbug*.”

Shortly after the London season had terminated, Mr. Stephen Kemble’s bills announced to the Durham public, “the first appearance of the celebrated Master Betty”—and one morning Mr. Liston found the manager, as was his wont, in the box-office, looking over the *box-plan*, taken prospec-

tively, for the "*Young Roscius*," and as he scanned it, executing a *piano-forte* accompaniment with the fingers of his right hand upon the desk before him.

Mr. Liston making some observations upon the subject of the expected star, asked the manager what his expectations were of the eventual result of Master Betty's appearance at Durham, and whether he thought the attraction would be great after the first night or so. King Stephen—with much earnestness, and executing, still, a *piano* passage upon the desk—without looking at the questioner, replied that it would be *enormously great*, adding, "It cannot be otherwise, Sir, with his *stupendous abilities*!" (here he struck a grand chord.)

"Indeed!" said Liston; "I did not know that *you* thought him so great an actor!"

"Sir," said Stephen, more emphatically, coming to rather a complicated and difficult movement in his *sonata*, "I look upon *Master Betty* to be a great—nay, Sir, I *may* say—the *greatest* tragic performer that ever appeared upon these, or any other, boards."

"I suppose," remarked Mr. Liston, drily, "you except Mrs. Siddons and John Kemble?"

"Sir," replied Stephen, more earnestly, "I except *nobody*;" and here he run up an octave cadence.

"Then," said Mr. Liston, "you have changed your opinion, Sir, since you wrote to Mrs. Kemble upon the subject; your impression, *then*, of the boy was not so favourable."

At this the manager came to a sudden *ad libitum* pause in his musical career, and turning round his face to Mr. Liston, thus pursued his opinion—

“Sir, *I maintain that Master Betty is the finest actor now living*, and I question whether he is not the finest, Sir, that *ever lived*”—(here his fine eyes assuming an arch expression, and his mouth relaxing into a roguish smile, he jogged his elbow playfully against Liston, adding)—“for *I’ve engaged him*, Sir!”

In conclusion to these remarks upon Master Betty, that of another critic—last, and though *least*—may be worthily quoted.

The accomplished Polish dwarf, Count Borowlaski, being in London during the young Roscius’s popularity, desirous of beholding a prodigy little less (though much bigger) than himself, was taken to Drury Lane Theatre by my Husband, and placed appropriately in a *petite loge* where he could see the young *Norval* to advantage. At the close of the play, the actors who were assembled for the afterpiece, anxious to view this dear little miniature of man, Mr. Mathews introduced him into the Green-Room, where, having made his elegant bow to those present, his opinion was asked respecting the wonderful boy whom he had seen act, and the following colloquy passed between the Count and Mr. Wroughton.

W.—“Well, Count, I hope you have been pleased with the evening’s performance.”

B.—“ Oh ! sare ! *Beauty* (beautiful) tragedy, Dooglas ! ”

W.—“ Yes ; but I hope you liked the acting of it, also.”

B.—Oh ! *Fine* language ! *et* affecting story, indid, *indid* ! ”

W.—“ But the *performances*, Count ; I hope they pleased you.”

B.—“ *Very* mooch, indid, Sare ! What dat lady’s nam’ (name)—Dooglas’ moder ? ”

W.—“ Oh ! you mean Mrs. Powel.

B.—“ Ah ! Beauty woman, Mrs. Powel ! ”

W.—“ Extraordinary boy, Master Betty, Count.”

B.—(as if not hearing the observation)—“ *Very* fine play, Dooglas ! ”

W.—Yes ; but Master Betty ? ”

B.—“ *Sweet* woman, your Mrs. Powel ; *fine* creature ! ”

W.—“ Well, Count, but the young *Norval* ? ”

B.—“ Has she hoosband ? ” (Husband.)

W.—“ No, Count, but—”

B.—“ Ha ! widow ! *dat* way ! *Grand* woman ! indid ! indid ! ”

W.—“ But you do not tell us what you think of the boy ! ”

B.—“ *Great* actress, Mrs. Powel ; *sweet* beauty-body ! ”

“ Well,” persisted Mr. Wroughton, who, with all present, was much amused at the Count’s evi-

dent, though well-bred, evasion of the main question—" But, my dear Count, we are all extremely anxious to learn your impression of the *Young Roscius*."

The Count, thus pressed, could no longer evade the point ; and after, of course, a *short* pause, thus replied—

" When I was yong man in Paris, *every* body run away to see littel Rabbit, which they had teach to play upon drum. It was ' stanishing' (astonishing) to see how Rabbit bit (beat) de drum with his littel drumstick ! Oh ! his master mak fortune soon ! Indid, *indid* it was stanishing !—and *every* body was surprise to see so littel creature mak so mooch noise ! I was 'stanished too. (Indid, indid, Sare, it was *very* clever, for *Rabbit*.) *Mais*—look now !—I would rader see *the drummer himself* do dat !"

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#### MATHEWS AND DENMAN.\*

THE above attached friends and brother-comedians, during their early engagement in Yorkshire with Tate Wilkinson, were solicited to give their ser-

\* Mr. Denman was engaged at the Haymarket Theatre in 1803 (when and where Mr. Mathews also first appeared in London), and was the original representative of *Vigil*, in Colman's " Love laughs at Locksmiths."

vices in a distant part of the country, for the benefit of a poor manager, with whom Mr. Denman had formerly acted ; and having obtained leave of good Old Tate, who never refused a kindness to the unfortunate, the friends set out on their charitable scheme.

While on their road, Denman recollected that in their present locality was domiciled a once schoolfellow of his, whom he had not seen since he took *Orders* (sometime for the Theatre, and afterwards for the Church), and prayed of Mr. Mathews to consent to a little *détour*, which would enable him to spend half an hour with the poor parson, who had recently obtained what was clerically denominated a “ Living ”—but which, in effect, proved somewhat short of that great desideratum of this life.

My Husband, who often went out of his way to oblige his friends, did not object to deviate a little on the present occasion ; and picking up some information from the clods on the road, the *voyageurs* soon reached the little hamlet and the house they sought.

The master of the humble parsonage, delighted to see his friend, received both the travellers with a hearty greeting—placing before them such cheer as this so sudden occasion permitted him to offer ;—namely, bread and cheese, and some excellent ale of the parson’s own brewing.

While the guests were thus refreshing themselves, their host attended, chatting gaily with his old schoolfellow, and giving him a sketch of his pre-

sent position and pursuits ; from which brief detail the actors gathered that the village in which their entertainer lived, was peopled by *small farmers*—the parson being the only resident “gentleman,” the medical man dwelling in a small town a few miles distant.

The pastor, as “flower of the flock,” was naturally held in vast respect by his humble parishioners, who yielded him even an extra-parochial share of homage ; for, over and above his humane kindness to the sick and dying, and those small every-day charities of Christian life, which are in some cases more to be prized than fine gold, the parson was ever ready to act the umpire, when little squabbles and difficulties arose to shake this little state, or trouble the community. He never refused to give advice—the only thing, indeed, he had power to give ; nevertheless a great boon in itself to the perplexed and un-informed. Thus he was, for the most part, regarded by these simple people as something semi-celestial, and never approached but with the utmost deference ;—a deference no doubt perpetuated by the affected dignity and self-important demeanour of the pastor himself—obvious, even in his most familiar moments, to his guests.

While the travellers were still partaking the simple fare before them, an audience with the clergyman was pressingly solicited by one of his parishioners. Apologising to his visitors for the necessity of receiving the applicant, whose business seemed

urgent, into the only parlour the parsonage boasted (and wishing, perhaps, to show his guests in what awe he was held by his neighbours)—after due ceremony, a simple-looking, elderly farmer was admitted to *the Presence*. The poor fellow, much embarrassed at finding himself not only face to face with the great man he had sought, but with two *other* “gentlefolks,” as he would have styled them, stood for a few moments immovable and speechless.

The clergyman—a short, fat, (we cannot say *pursey*) little body, looked upon his honest neighbour with a consequential air of patronage—as if he would have *said*—

“My good friend, you see before you, by the behest of Providence, a being immeasurably superior to yourself (and *others*). But I do not, therefore, allow myself to forget that I am a *Man*!—speak freely.”—

This look seemed to encourage the farmer, who, however, not without much hesitation, and eyelids depressed—while he seemed measuring the ample brim of his hat, which he twirled round in his coarse, clean fingers—was able to explain to “his *Reverence*”—as he invariably called the parson—that his “good *dame*” had “departed this loife suddenly the noight afore”—and as her remains would, with permission of “his *Reverence*,” be consigned to mother-earth the following Sunday, the mourner wished to pay a just tribute to his lost “spouse” in the gratifying form of a funeral



“oration,” delivered in the hearing of his assembled neighbours—and that the chief object of his present visit was, to ascertain from “his Reverence” what “sooch a matter moight coome to.”

“His Reverence” hereat drew up his little fubsy figure to its fullest height, and putting on a solemnity of countenance he pinched his chin, knitted his brows, and casting his eyes up to the ceiling as if he was casting up an account, seemed to deliberate for several minutes upon the sum total of the vast affair. During this pause, the honest farmer stood in the gap of the door with nervous trepidation and restless expectation of the result, shifting momentarily the position of his huge and heavily burdened feet. It appeared quite evident that he was “*upon thorns*,” which pointedly urged these alternations in order to relieve the pain accruing from such a probation. At length the mighty man, upon whose breath hung the posthumous fame of the farmer’s wife, informed the bereaved that, to have the virtues and good qualities of the deceased duly and effectively set forth, the edifying theme could not possibly be done justice to under the charge of one guinea.

At this startling—and, as it appeared, *excessive* demand, the ambitious farmer turned pale up to the tops of his enormous ears, previously the colour of beet-root—and which curled and protruded themselves forward, as if in eager anxiety to learn the result of their owner’s application.

It was now the widower’s turn to deliberate,

which he did with redoubled emotion of mind and body.

It was true he ardently desired to pay a due tribute to his long-loved partner's worth—but he had not anticipated that her qualities, excellent as they were, could be valued by any other person at a higher price than that at which himself had rated them. The parson's charge was *astounding*! and the agitated man again shifted his uneasy feet, while, with a convulsive spasm, he clutched the neck of a yellow canvass bag, for which he had dived, and drawn forth from the deep recess of his securest pocket when he first entered upon the main question,—as if to show his ready-money capabilities. He coughed, hesitated, stammered and again coughed—at length clearing his throat and drawing a long breath, which might, indeed, have been mistaken for a sigh, he confessed—with submission to “his reverence”—that the cost of the affair far exceeded his most liberal calculations. He declared that he loved his poor lost “dame,” and would willingly do what was “roight” to her memory, adding that she was the first “woife” that he had lost, and her death had already cost him many tears, but he was altogether unprepared for the great additional demand now made on her account—(here a slight chinking of the canvass bag was perceptible, from the poor farmer's emotion).

The parson made no reply to these pathetic remarks—and in his very silence seemed inexorable.

The agitated mourner, now hummed and ha'd—shifted his feet once more, and with his fore-finger nail, relieved the tickling above his forehead, caused by his perplexity—when partially opening the mouth of the aforesaid canvass bag (which shook as though in fearful apprehension of the injurious gap it was about to sustain) with the sound of his gold, he tested the pastor's metal.

Every argument, however, for any extra-parochial favour to the departed seemed lost upon the shrewd and needy churchman, who obviously thought more of his “Living,” than the *dead*.

The ambitious and *well-to-do* farmer, secretly bent upon the “oration” at any price, though habitually chaffering and haggling for a good bargain, at length opined that “his Reverence” might be induced to accept a smaller remuneration for the luxury coveted, in consideration of a “*poor, and hard working man*”—which twofold plea possibly reminding the parson of his own unremitting labours, and narrow stipend, and his sole exertions for the good of all the souls in the parish, he gave a searching glance at the wide and now open mouth of the farmer's money bag, from which he turned a steady look at the broad healthy form of his bacon-fed parishioner—his gaze dropping from it pensively upon his own bread and cheese—he once more drew up his figure, which though portly, evidently derived all its consequence from the ale which he brewed—there being little doubt

but that, like Farquhar's *Boniface*, he "*ate* his ale," as well as "*drank* his ale"—again turned his eyes upward, and pinched his chin more mercilessly than before, as if nicely calculating *possibilities*. At last, he shook his head despairingly, and in reply to the farmer's reiterated suggestion—that "his Reverence" *might* be able to perform the required undertaking upon smaller profit—the parson slowly, and with a significant shrug, which seemed to express his utter disinterestedness in the result—observed—

"Why—*yes* ;—to be sure I *could* preach you a funeral sermon for as little as *half* a guinea—but then, *it wouldn't be worth hearing!*"

This assurance was conclusive, and the bereaved man quitted the parsonage one-and-twenty shillings lighter than he entered it.

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#### MR. MATHEWS'S GALLERY GRIEVANCES.

MR. MATHEWS'S portrait gallery was at once a source of pleasure and annoyance to him. When an interested and intelligent visiter came to see it, the owner had great enjoyment in chatting and illustrating the subjects ; and it was really a treat, when he was so disposed, to listen to his extempore catalogue *raisonné*, his anecdotes, and occasional

imitations of the persons represented. He would, sometimes, when he thought he had a worthy audience, take a long stick in his hand, and gives a description of every subject in imitation of the snuffling, monotonous, and Dog-berry-like exhibitors, at Greenwich Hospital, and other show-places, where a learned Theban so materially enhances the pleasure of the visitants, by describing, what must be quite obvious to his *little boys and girls*—as it should seem—and is, what Mr. Mathews would call, when any common-place and unnecessary information was given by any conceited individual to him—“very kind to *children*.” In short, he would keep all present in roars of laughter, by his pleasant fancies and high spirits.

But far otherwise did it fall out, when he found himself, as it were, tied by the leg to some dull and un-informed querist, or detected the fact that such a person had made the *gallery* his ostensible point of attraction when it was the *owner of it* only he desired to view. From such people he would suddenly break off, pleading the necessity of his taking his usual ride, and, turning them over to some portfolios of engravings, leave them to amuse themselves. In a very short time after, these *lovers of dramatic lore* would be seen driving back to town.

At other times he would allow a large party of strangers to appoint a visit to the gallery ; and a few minutes before the arrival, a fit of bashfulness would come over him, and he would take fright at seeing them, order his pony, and beg me to receive

the expected visitors, and apologize for his absence ; but, oh, the *woe* depicted in some faces, when they found the gallery without the only original they wished to see there!—the *shell* without the *Nut* ! Had every incident and observation that took place in this gallery been set down in memory, they would have made a very amusing collection. Few cases have survived oblivion, but they are very fair specimens of what repeatedly occurred to entertain, and sometimes vex, the collector. A half-length portrait of Mr. Hull, in his eightieth year, attired in scarlet coat, nankeen shorts, six stray hairs of a side, dressed “ *à la pigeon* ;” in short, the whole a specimen of the old school of private life, was one day declared the best likeness of Mr. Mathews ever seen, although somewhat *too old* for him. It would sometimes strike a lady, that an exquisite painting of Mrs. Siddons, by Harlow, in the sleeping scene of *Lady Macbeth*, was an excellent portrait of myself, though a little *fatter* than I then was ; another visiter would break into a roar of laughter, at Garrick, in *Jaffier*, and see Liston in every line of the face ; while others would mistake Miss de Camp, in the *Gentle Shepherd*, for Master Betty, as *Norval*, &c. &c.

The gallery was furnished consistently throughout, after the general taste of the cottage, in the Gothic style ; the carpet was in imitation of inlaid oak, the tables, chairs, cabinets, pedestals, &c., were formed of ancient carved wood, &c.

At the period now quoted, the celebrated casket made from Shakspeare's mulberry-tree, and pre-

sented by the corporation of Stratford to Garrick, stood upon its silver-swan-supporters, under a glass shade; and, though not larger than a tea-caddy, was conspicuous from its own beauty, being exquisitely carved, with scenes from the immortal bard on every side. A noble lady one day, after taking a very cursory glance at the portraits, and shewing much more interest in the many curiosities which the room contained, in relation to dramatic affairs, naturally fixed her regards upon this little *bijou*, the Casselette, the origin and history of which I related to her ladyship, who was “so *delighted* with every thing within and without the cottage, that she begged permission to introduce some friends of her’s another day, in order to afford them the gratification she had received.” At the appointed period, Lady —— and her Lord, accompanied by two carriages filled with curiosity hunters, arrived; who after being first shown into every room, and dragged all round the grounds, *the gallery, par excellence*, reserved as a *bonne bouche*, was displayed to the gazers, her ladyship undertaking the account of every thing in it; a task which the owner was glad enough to relinquish, seeing at a glance that these friends came more to see the living original than those who breathed only upon canvass. But what was my Husband’s surprise to hear her voluble Ladyship, addressing herself to the youngest person of the party, though not without calling upon the general attention to her information, exclaim—

“ And *here* — look now at this beautiful little box, and those finely carved chairs and tables, my love, they were *all* made from Shakspeare's mulberry tree !”

One of the party venturing upon an incredulous remark, her Ladyship quoted me as her authority ; and thus compelled a refutation, at the expense of her Ladyship's common sense. *A grove* of mulberry-trees would scarcely have produced wood enough for the results before them.

On another occasion, Mr. Mathews had received a very pressing request from a gentleman, a stranger, who professed a strong interest in pictures, and the arts in general,—that Mr. Mathews would give him an order of admission to his Portrait Gallery. The letter was so politely couched, that Mr. M., somehow, did not feel disposed to refuse the writer of it the *favour* he asked—and as he evidently did not come to “ *stare at* ” the master of the house—and “ *no orders* were admitted”—the owner resolved to pay the stranger the compliment of receiving him in person.

At the very moment appointed, arrived an old gentleman of very precise aspect, and of old-school breeding, treating Mr. Mathews with the minuet-bow of his youth, and expressing his very high sense of the favour granted. On being ushered into the gallery, he looked confounded at the number of portraits, and made many observations upon



them, that proved him a tolerable judge of painting ; but, at the same time, it was clear that he had never been into a theatre in his life ;—that is, judging from his total ignorance not only of the features, but of the *names* of the actors. And after twaddling about the room for a short time, he suddenly enquired—

“ Whether there was a portrait of *Milton* amongst them ? ”

A concise “ *No*,” answered the inquiry, and evidently chagrined the old gentleman, who again betook himself to the portraits, making the most lame and impotent conclusions respecting them ;—and once more he expressed his regret, and indeed his *surprise*, that Mr. Mathews had not possessed himself of a portrait of *Milton*, which he deemed an oversight in the collector :—to all of which, my Husband (a little impatient at such a mistaken view of the present collection) remarked, in a *rather irritable* tone—

“ *Milton*, Sir, was not an *actor* ! ” Adding, with some force of emphasis—“ And I *never* admit *any person* into *this room* *who has not been an actor*, or acted at least *once* ! ”

At this intelligence the blood mounted to the very roots of the old gentleman’s powdered pate ; and drawing up his shrivelled person, with formal dignity and evident offence, observed—

“ *Then*, Sir, I must consider *myself* an *intruder* ! ”

And bowing stiffly—more, as it seemed, in com-

pliance with his own inveterate good breeding, than any real courtesy to the person before him—the the matter-of-fact old gentleman, whose (now) only pleasure was to be displeased, backed himself out of the room, and, despite of his astonished host's endeavour to explain his meaning—and following him to the gate for the purpose—persisted in getting into his attendant carriage; when, with another starched bow from the window, he disappeared, leaving my Husband, like the portrait of Garrick between Tragedy and Comedy, doubtful whether to laugh or to cry—be grave or gay—lively or severe—at such a piece of provoking stolidity.

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## MATHEWS RURALIZING.

MY Husband, as it has been elsewhere explained, was a very shy man with strangers, and particularly disliked to be personally noticed (out of his profession) in public by people whom he did not know—or, indeed, to find himself recognized by them.

Ruralizing at Mr. De Camp's cottage near Finchley, it being fair-time, some booths were erected, *pro tempore*, upon the Common.

Mr. Mathews, it is also known, had a strong passion for sight-seeing, and took at all times an especial interest in animals, wild or domestic. Determined to have the morning to himself, and fearing that if he took the "*handsome French farmer*" (as Mr. De Camp was generally called in his own neighbourhood, where he was also recognized as a London actor) with him, that such a well-known companion might lead to his own detection, he left his host busy in his field, and sauntered forth in all the comfort of an *incognito*—deeming, that at a distance of nine miles from town, and in such a scene, he might escape any particular notice;—and sure enough he found no one there but a set of clowns and village girls, who were too busy looking at the real tigers and leopards, to think of making a *lion* of a *man*.

Having amused himself with the *brute-beast-es*, and other objects of natural curiosity, he observed a "*Theatre*," in which was announced "a tragedy, opera, and farce—all to be performed in the short space of twenty minutes, by any *gentleman's stop-watch*"—and all for the small charge of *three-pence*! Not able to deny himself such a dramatic *treat*, Mr. Mathews mounted the step-ladder which led to the *boxes* (divided from the pit by an old carpet), and pausing at the entrance, while he fished out of the pocket of a tight-fitting waistcoat, a piece of silver, with which to pay the price of admission. The

*Manager*, in a blue wig, grotesquely dressed, and *painted à la Grimaldi*, who was stationed to receive the visiters (and their money), whom his prepossessing appearance and manner—which would have lured a bird from the tree—had invited from the gaping crowd, no doubt, found time to survey his new customer; who, at length, presented his money to the *Manager*, when the man, with a hurt look, put back the hand which held forth the proffered coin, and with that sort of expression in his face which says, as plainly as *words* could say, “*I am sorry you think so meanly of me,*” observed with some dignity, though with great mildness—

“No!—no, *Mr. Matthus!* Ve never takes from *von another!* Pray valk in, Sir.” Adding, with an air of patronage, “I’m werry appy, *Mr. Matthus, Sir,* to see you in my theatur!”

“*Mister Matthus*” drooped his head, quite abashed, and crept into the hole called a door, with a silent bend of grateful acknowledgment for the flattering liberality shown him by a brother-comedian.

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## ELLISTON.

IN the Memoirs of my Husband, I abstained from any mention of Mr. Elliston's eccentricities—which omission excited some dissatisfaction in several critics—who, very justly, surmised that I knew much, if not more, of that gentleman's private habits and manners than the generality of people. The truth is, I purposely avoided touching upon such points,\*—feeling the difficulty and delicacy of the attempt under my own peculiar opinions of the subject—viewing as I did Mr. Elliston's imputed aberrations as wilful adoptions, and for the most part, the *malice prepense* of his wayward humour. In his potent state, he was, no doubt, like other men, fitful and perverse—but we must not take the sickly fit for the sound man. Mr. Elliston was, in fact, a *Humorist*, and I, who, when a child, have sat upon his knee, and continued my intimacy with him up to womanhood, can assert that more than half the strange things said and done by Mr. Elliston were the suggestions of his merry mood, which loved to exaggerate its own meaning and to mystify those about him.

Very few people understood, and therefore, unintentionally, misrepresented Mr. Elliston. Often

\* The subsequently published accounts, sanctioned by his son, relieves me from all scruples.

have I seen him *get up* a pompous scene to those who did not perceive his drift, and while acting it, he would turn his merry and eloquent eyes aside to me with an expression which said, *you* comprehend what I am about—but this fellow has no idea that I am laughing at him for my own amusement. More stories have been told of Mr. Elliston's oddities than of any other man's—some, I think, might go now to prove him a very *Jeremy Diddler* in principle, or a *fool*—neither of which was he when I knew him. Mr. Elliston was by education and association a gentleman, and bating those unfortunate moments when divorced from *himself*, or in those half serious, half playful moods—when he might have said with Puck—

“Those things do best please me, that befall preposterously.”

He was a most delightful companion—and it might have been said of *him*, in homely phrase, with more point than of most people, that in conversation “*he was as good as a comedy* ;” aye, and one of the very *best* comedies too. I remember few people, who carried their professional charm more entirely into their private life ; Mr. Elliston, in his *manner*, was like that of many other actors—a distinct person behind the scenes, and in society, *i. e. in*, and *out of a theatre*,—“where nothing is, but all things seem.” In the former position, it always appeared to me that he felt it necessary to “put an antic disposition on,” especially when he became a manager

—in order to cope with the oddity and variety of character and temper he then encountered, but at these times, I am fully persuaded that like Hamlet, he was only mad—"north north-west."

At the period when Mr. Elliston was master of the *Olympic Revels*, he certainly amused himself and others with some extravagances, and undoubtedly "into strange vagaries fell."

At one time it was believed that he entertained a serious desire for a seat in Parliament, and himself strengthened the belief, by referring to it whenever the idea was most prevalent ; namely, when

"The oracle of Apollo spoke out of the pottle ;"

and one night, when the gods were performing certain Olympic games and evolutions in the arena of Mr. Elliston's theatre, not very favourable to the newly-covered seats, upon which, during a temporary tumult (which roused the manager from a nap he was taking in his dressing-room), they were hardy enough to *stand*. Mr. Elliston, in a moment of excessive excitement, with the sum total of his upholsterer's bill before his eyes, rushed before the audience and as Jupiter is said to hurl his thunder when he wakes, thus roared out the Olympian Jove, in a stentorian voice of command—

"*In Parliament or out of Parliament, those benches are mine ! Get down !!!*" And he *was obeyed !*

At the time of the approaching coronation of George the Fourth, Mr. Elliston met my Husband as he was riding on his pony through the streets. Elliston, who was upon his *high horse*, stopped his friend, and asked whether he was prepared to attend the next week's *Royal ceremony*; exclaiming, more like to a command than an enquiry—

“ Mathews ! *you go* to the coronation ?”

“ No,” replied *Mathews*, “ I don't think I could get up early enough—or, indeed, lame as I am, bear the fatigue.”

“ My good fellow,” said Elliston, earnestly, “ you *must go* ! The King will *expect it*.”

“ Ah ! *indeed* ?” said Mr. Mathews, smiling.

“ Yes,” added Elliston, “ you *must go*.”

“ Do you mean to go ?” asked his amused friend.

“ No,” replied Elliston, “ I do *not*.”

“ Well !” said my Husband, “ you say *I must*—why do you not go also ?”

“ My *dear Mathews*,” said Robert William, with mysterious meaning, “ I *can't*—I would if I *could*—but I *can't* ! His Majesty *knows* I can't ! But you *must go* !”

And with one of his merry chuckles, and a twinkle of his eye, he bustled off to the theatre, to prepare for the *scenic* coronation of *George the Fourth*, in the person of *Robert William*—the self-crowned and reigning monarch of Drury Lane Theatre.

Unfortunately Mr. Elliston too early lost one of the most amiable of wives and beautiful of



women, and his occasional departure from the strict line of temperance during her life, became after her death more frequent, and I fear subsequently grew into a confirmed *necessity* (like Ariadne, who finding herself forsaken by Theseus, transferred her affections to Bacchus—Elliston, deprived of his best friend, imbibed an attachment to the god of wine, and son of Semale) and my family and myself saw but little of him in his later years. I am not aware that the following fact has been related in the biographical notices of him since his death, of which I have only seen a portion, but they form amusing specimens of (what I believe them to have been) those self-diverting eccentricities, in which he was apt to indulge when at all elated.

- One evening, while Mr. Elliston continued lessee of the Olympic Theatre, a favourite piece called *Charles the Second* was in its run, in which a Mr. Carles sustained a principal character. That gentleman, on his way to the theatre to dress for the part, having somehow incurred a *suspicion of debt*, was arrested and placed in “durance vile;” the consequence was, that in the sudden emergency another actor, who had once before been a substitute in the same part, was dressed and sent upon the stage without the usual ceremony of apology to the audience for such a change. When, therefore, the unlucky substitute appeared as the “Mutton-eating King,” some fastidious persons in the *pit* made a demur, and an angry stir ensued; the question

of "Where's Carles?" became the (dis)order of the time, and "Carles! Carles!" was the popular demand—a demand which Mr. Elliston was not backward to answer in his own way, and coming promptly forward with his most profound bow, respectfully, though haughtily, enquired of the "*Ladies and Gentleman*" what was "their *pleasure*."

Several voices vociferated "*Carles!*" Elliston knitted his brows with excessive earnestness, affecting to be confounded by the noise, and, with increasing gravity, again desired to be acquainted with the occasion of the extraordinary tumult, adding, with something like command in his tone, "*One at a time, if you please.*" Again the popular cry was audible to those who "had ears to hear." But Mr. Elliston's tympanum was strangely insensible and dull. One mal-content, raising his voice, however, louder than the rest, enforced Mr. Elliston's attention, and fixing his eyes suddenly upon the man, the manager then turned his face from him for a moment, and haughtily *begging pardon* of the rest of the pit, added, "Let me hear what *this gentleman* has to say;" and pointing to the turbulent individual in question, observed sternly, "*Now, Sir, I'll attend to you—first, if the rest of the gentlemen will allow me;*" and here he made a stiff bow to the *gentlemen* in question. All now became suddenly silent, and the selected person sat down, looking rather sheepish at the distinction shown him above

“his fellows,” and Mr. Elliston, stooping over the orchestra and fixing his eyes, like a brow-beating barrister, on his victim, thus emphatically addressed his chosen man :—

“*Now*, Sir, be so good as to inform me *what* it is *you require* ?”

The man, still abashed at being thus singled out for particular notice, in rather a subdued tone, but affecting his former valour, answered—“Carles ! Carles !”

“Oh ! *Carles !!!*” exclaimed Elliston, in a tone of surprise, as if only at that moment aware of the cause of dissatisfaction, “Oh ! ha ! you want *Mr. Carles* ? Is *that* what you say, Sir ?”

“*Yes*, responded the Pit-ite, with renewed confidence ; “his name’s in the bill !”

“*Very good*, Sir !” said the manager who, throughout, carried himself with the air of one who felt *himself* the *injured party*, “I understand you *now* ! — you are *right*, *so far*, Sir,—Mr. Carles’s name *is* in the bill.”

Here Mr. Elliston was interrupted by others who repeated—

Yes ! yes !—his name’s in the bill !—his name’s in the bill !”

“*Gentlemen !* with *your* leave, I will say a few words—” (all was again silent, and the manager’s earnestness and dignity increased as he proceeded) —“I admit that Mr. Carles’s name *is* in the bill—I don’t wish to deny it, but”—(and here he assumed

a solemnity of face and voice, and with his deepest tragedy-manner, impressively observed)—“ *But* are you to be reminded of the many accidents that may intervene between the morning’s issuing of *that bill* and the evening’s fulfilment of its promise? Is it requisite to remind the enlightened and thinking portion of the public here assembled (and he took a sweeping glance round the house), that the chances and changes of human life are dependent on *circumstances* and not upon *ourselves*?”

Here the “enlightened” exclaimed “Aye, aye; bravo;” and Mr. Elliston, gaining courage from this slight manifestation of sympathy, turned himself once more to *his man* with renewed *hauteur*, crying sharply, “And *you*, Sir, you who are so *loud* in your demand for Mr. Carles, cannot *you* also imagine that his absence may be occasioned by some dire distress, some occurrence not within human foresight to anticipate or divert? Can you not picture to yourself the possibility of Mr. Carles at this moment upon a sick—nay, perhaps, a *dying* bed—surrounded by his weeping children and his agonized wife!”—(Mr. Carles was a bachelor)—“whose very bread depends upon the existence of an affectionate, devoted husband and father—and who *may* be deprived of his exertions and support for ever? Is it so *very* difficult to imagine a scene like this taking place at the very moment you are calling for him so imperiously to appear before you—selfishly desirous of your present amusement, and unmindful

of his probable danger!"—(great and general applause). "And *you*, Sir, will, perhaps, *repeat* your demand to have Mr. Carles brought before you! Are you a husband? are you a father?"

"Oh, shame! shame!" resounded now from every part of the pit.

"You are *right*, Sirs," resumed the Manager; "you are *quite* right. It *is* a shame; I blush at such inhumanity!"

"Turn him out! turn him out!" was now generally vociferated, even by those who had originally joined in the objectionable demand, and Elliston, choosing to receive this suggestion as a *question* addressed to himself, promptly replied with the most dignified assent—

"If you *please*!"

"*Aussitôt dit, aussitôt fait!*" In the next moment the offending individual was lifted above the heads of his brother mal-contents, and in spite of his vehement remonstrances and struggles, hoisted across the pit, actually ejected, and the door closed upon him by his removers. Mr. Elliston, who had waited the result with great composure, now bowed *very low*, while he received the general applause of the house, and retired in grave triumph, laughing heartily (in his sleeve) at the gullibility of Olympian intellect.

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LISTON.

“ Fly in Nature's face ?—  
 But how if Nature fly in my face first ?  
 Then Nature 's the aggressor,—let her look to 't.”

DRYDEN.

It is a curious fact, that the greater portion of our best comedians, made, by their own choice, their dramatic *entrée* upon tragedy stilts. Amongst these may be numbered—

*Munden, Lewis, Bannister, Elliston, Jones, Downton, Bartley, Wrench*, and last, but “not least in our dear love,” the exquisite *Liston*.

This early yearning for tragedy honours has also been, erringly, ascribed to my Husband, and since his death several good *stories* have been set down of his own expressed conviction, that he possessed both power and fitness to be a fine tragedian.—But his early letters and professional history “o’erweigh a whole theatre” of such evidence, and confute it at once.

Excepting the particular just touched upon, there is a very remarkable coincidence to be traced in the early dramatic struggles of Liston and Mathews. At not a very remote period of time, these extraordinary comedians and exemplary men, first imbibed the acting mania, and alike entered upon their pro-

bation against the tastes and approval of their respective friends. Both belonged to families able and willing to establish them reputably in the world. Both were well educated, and each had the means offered him of moving in an easy and reputable sphere of life—and both showing an ineptitude for their prescribed vocations, quitted home and the love of friends, to wander in an unknown path, and struggle through an uncertain, rugged track, without guide or experience—void alike of means or any manifest talent for a successful issue to their pursuit.

The varied events of Mr. Mathews's life are already before the public, and should the "*Memoirs of John Liston*" be one day (and may that day be far distant !) traced by some faithful hand, when he no longer lives but in the affectionate memory of his many friends and admirers, it will assuredly appear that these brother comedians—brotherly alike in their private, as well as dramatic union, (the latter of which appeared at one time Siamese and inseparable,) had many points of characteristic resemblance. When together upon the stage it was perceptible to their audience that they delighted each other, as much as others delighted in them ;—their professional good understanding might possibly have been founded upon their social regard—but whatever was the origin, the public were the gainers by this result—and it is certain, their obvious enjoyment of

each other's acting, considerably enhanced that of the spectators.\*

But to be progressive as well as digressive—Mr. Liston's first *essay* at making the stage his dependence was at Durham, under the management of Mr. Stephen Kemble, who, having conceived some temporary distaste for his then principal tragedians, the late Mr. Egerton, and Mr. Bew, (afterwards an eminent dentist at Brighton) was induced to answer an extremely well written application from a "young gentleman" who was desirous of an engagement in the tragic line, and *Mr. Liston* was forthwith instructed to hasten his arrival, in order to assist in the plays then in contemplation for Mrs. Siddons, who was shortly expected to perform a stated number of nights.

The ambitious novice, nothing loth, hastened to obey this almost unhoped-for summons, and without giving himself time for requisite preparation or due appliances for such an undertaking, entered a Newcastle collier, with just about money enough in his pocket to defray the expences of his voyage and, as he calculated, to subsist on until his first week's salary (the amount of which was to be commensurate with his success) became due. But what was money to him who thirsted only for fame!—It was unworthy of a thought, much less the mortification of

\* Let the play-goer of 1808-9-10, of the old Haymarket Theatre—turn back his remembrance upon those evenings, and the subsequent seasons of Covent Garden, when these friends played into each other's hands so admirably.



applying for it to the friends he was deserting ; and so this high-souled youth departed and *made no sign*. His buoyant spirit, however, was soon subdued, for the weather proved unfavourable, the wind adverse, and instead of duly reaching the haven of his hopes, the vessel was detained on its passage nearly a fortnight beyond the usual term, and after all his haste and anxiety, when the incipient hero reached Durham and appeared before the *great* manager, he received the astounding intelligence that he came *too late* !—

(“ Oh ! that *too late* ! how sad a sound it hath ! ”) for concluding, from his non-arrival at the promised time, that the “ young gentleman ” had changed his mind, he (Mr. Stephen Kemble) had made up his differences with his two tragic performers Messrs. Egerton and Bew, and consequently Mr. Liston’s services were then unavailable, and could not possibly be called into requisition.

The novice was at first mute with dismay at what seemed little less than ruin to his future prospects ; but when, in rather abrupt terms, he was advised to return to the place from whence he came, the deadly sentence roused him to a due sense of his hapless position ; and in reply to Mr. Kemble’s recommendation to go back again, he asked, with great *naïveté*—

“ How am I to go back, without money ? ”

This simple and straightforward question posed the manager, who possibly might have said, in a stage-aside-like *Mr. Sneer*, “ So that you *do* go, the public will not care *how* ; ” for doubtless the

evident inexperience of the stripling before him failed to impress the beholder with sanguine expectations of any brilliant result from his trial. But after a further colloquy with the stranger (who was evidently a gentleman), King Stephen doggedly admitted that the delay had not been the young man's fault, and that he (the manager) "supposed he must try to do *something with him*, since he had *come*." And with this ungracious admission, the poor youth was fain to remain content, and await patiently his time.

Now be it known, that the whole of the *aspirant's stock in trade* consisted of but "one head of hair" (save what Nature had manufactured for him);—but then *what* a one it was! Wigs are the first "properties" coveted and sought after by every stage-struck hero; and the one now mentioned happened to be a very extraordinary specimen of the *genus*. It had some time before been copied, by the desire of its possessor—without any consideration of the occasion to which it might be applicable—from a finely-painted head of *Ugolino*, which the would-be actor had seen, and which had struck his young imagination powerfully. This wig was remarkable for long flowing curls of black and grey hair blended: wild and picturesque in effect, and—*as Mr. Liston thought*—peculiarly becoming to his own peculiar features, which, abating a little of the *aquiline*, he fancied not altogether dissimilar to those of the portrait in question.

This valuable possession—his *all!*—was now frequently tried on and practised in before a looking-glass, during the study of those characters which it was possible he *might* perform. But, alas! it was long before this might became a right, or even an opportunity afforded for a display of the cherished “property.” The difficulty of finding a character unappropriated in an over-charged company, in which he could appear, was for a long time insurmountable. But “Time shapes all things to their end;” and at length—oh, joyful hearing!—it was announced to Mr. Liston that he could make his first bow to the Durham public in the play of “*Lover’s Vows*,” as the *Baron Wildenhaim*—the once heedless betrayer of the humble *Agatha*, father of the deserted *Frederrick*, and, at the period of the drama, an influential and haughty nobleman, requiring weight of manner, and dignity of deportment, to sustain with due propriety. Nevertheless the young actor saw no cause why he should not be satisfied or satisfying in the part, though surely there could not have been so unfit a representative of it at any time. His (since handsome) figure being then as slender as shapeless youth could render it, and wholly wanting in that bulk and importance which, time out of mind, the “heavy barons” and “tyrannical fathers” of the stage are expected to possess.

The “head of hair”—the darling wig—was drawn forth exultingly, and judiciously accommodated to the current character of true German ex-

pression, by its now happy wearer, who, *malgré* his deficiency of personal breadth, and the ill-fitting costume provided for him, "a world too wide" for his spare form, delivering the words of the author sensibly, was—after the first *titter* at his appearance—*let off* by the audience without any pointed manifestations of any kind; and the haughty baron, on the dropping of the curtain, sneaked into his dressing-room, unheeded, uncheered by one remark from his brother performers; and taking off his *Ugolino* with a tender sigh, and casting aside the cumbrous green and gold of the "heavy baron," retired to his melancholy lodging, in pensive speculation of the probable result of the night's performance.

The manager having a dinner engagement, and his professional services not being required on the above evening, he commissioned his daughter (the *first* admired "Fanny Kemble," since, and still, Mrs. Arkwright) to witness the actor's performance, and report the effect. This the young lady did the next morning, in nearly the following words:—

"Mr. Liston is a very young man; but he has some very good tones in his voice, and speaks very sensibly. I don't think he is a *handsome* man; but perhaps the very extraordinary *wig* he wore, and the manner in which he had marked his face, might cause him to appear otherwise."

The truth was, the young, unpractised *artiste* had thought it necessary to *double-score* his face for the baron's *two* score years and ten; and had *so made*

*himself up*, that it would have been difficult for a person unacquainted with his features, to determine what they were in reality. He had so lined and re-lined them with Indian ink, that little else was visible, and the beholders were necessarily ignorant of what "ills might lurk unseen;" for it might have been supposed, that in the absence of a better model, he had resorted to the familiar one of a grid-iron, from which to copy the lines (the cordage) of age:—thus his cheeks were striped like a zebra.

He was not again tried, and so escaped being condemned — until Mrs. Siddons arrived, whose plays requiring numbers, the new actor's chance was mended.

The first character given him to study was that of the venerable *Jarvis*, in the tragedy of "*the Gamester*." This Mr. Liston considered very lucky, as far as it concerned Ugolino's "head of hair," which would come admirably into play, and, indeed, when arrayed in the prescribed external, to be found in every theatre - "*stock*," 'yclept "a camlet fly," exclusively—I know not why—adopted by the *Rowley's* and other friendly twaddlers of the old drama, who hold no definite rank in the society in which they move—the slim youth contrived to look the "lean and slippered pantaloon" tolerably—that is to say, his appearance when dressed, was not absolutely *startling*, and the less so, as, at the friendly suggestion of Miss Kemble, he had placed his *lines* in more *pleasant places* than they appeared in on the first occasion, and he had

laid on old *Jarvis's* weight of years with a lighter and more lenient hand than had marked the fifty summers of the *Baron Wildenheim*.

It is necessary to mention, that, at the morning's rehearsal of the "Gamester," Mrs. Siddons was obviously struck with a sense of the ludicrous, when the appointed representative of the good *old Jarvis* appeared upon the stage before her; an incipient smile trembled upon her chiselled lip, and during the rehearsal, when not engaged on the stage, with the venerable youth, the tragic muse amused herself at the side-scenes, in conversation with her sister (afterwards Mrs. Mason), and Liston, *Scrub-like*, verily believed that they talked of *him*, "for they laughed consumedly." His *amour propre* was, however, more positively touched when Mrs. Siddons afterwards addressed him in the language of undisguised correction; there was something in her tone and manner of doing this which greatly offended him, and he felt inclined to resent what he could not help thinking, carried with it an unfeeling air of ridicule, ill-concealed, during the greater part of the remarks directed to him, so that by the time that the last scene came on, the amiable and devoted *Jarvis* was found sullen and impracticable.

Amongst other things required, the great actress laid serious stress upon the manner in which she desired the co-operation of her aged friend in the concluding scene of the tragedy; in the course of which, he would have to place his arms around her

waist, in order to restrain the effort she was accustomed to make to reach the dead body of her suicidal husband—explaining at the same time how great her own personal strength really was, and that in the energy of her feelings it would be strenuously exerted to release herself from his grasp—giving at the same time, a practical lesson to the young actor by placing his hands, as she wished him to place them at the appointed time, and enjoining him to hold her firmly and determinately, otherwise she should break from him, and the effect of the scene would be lost, &c. &c.

The young gentleman was silently and sullenly attentive to these instructions—in his heart still resentful of the great actress's suspected unkindness, and he appeared listless and languid in his obedience, apparently incompetent to so great a demand upon his strength,—so that, at length, after several trials, Mrs. Siddons gave up the point, doubting the result of her great scene, and eventually retired from her inefficient ally, with an evident distrust of his muscular powers, and perhaps making up her mind to stint her emotions to the physical deficiencies of her—no doubt, well-meaning, but infirm *young* friend.

Night came, and the venerable Jarvis passed on from scene to scene with due propriety, his merit shadowed by the resplendent lustre of the evening-star upon which all eyes were turned: thus


“The greater glory ever dims the less;”

and Mr. Liston continued sullen and vengeful, nor would he allow himself to cast one admiring glance upon the meteor before him. “*Why should he? Why,*” he asked himself, “should *he* do homage to the full blown lustre of a woman, who had refused to discern, much less to encourage, *his* dawning brightness, and had even turned her eyes in ridicule upon his face as though it was less tragic than her own! Was *his* a face to be *laughed* at?” The reader may answer this question, for the querist *could* not, at *that time*.

At length, the critical, the closing scene arrived, that scene from which the great mistress of her art was wont to send all hearers weeping to their beds, and the young *old* Jarvis entered into his share of it with the spirit of a Zanga, and a determination to give blow for blow; in fact, to show no favour to her whom he fancied had rendered no justice to *him*. “What was the fame of Mrs. Siddons to *him*? had she considered *his* when she threw ridicule over *his* tragic efforts?” his ill humour and mortified vanity answered “*No!* why, therefore, should he cling to her chariot wheel, and grace her sole victory, who would in her triumph lay him prostrate, and trample down his genius the next minute? He had not in fact,” he persuaded himself, “personal strength sufficient to hold back this powerful woman as she required, and if he *had*, he was engaged for the powers of his mind, and not hired for



the muscular force of his body ; why then should he strain a point, to hold up one who seemed willing to keep him down ?” In short, the no longer friendly and faithful Jarvis, resolved “ to do his spiriting so gently,” that though he would not let Mrs. Beverly *fail*, yet would he not assist her effectively :—he would show her what it was to rouse the lion in an ambitious breast. It followed, at the appointed time, he prepared languidly to restrain the emotions of the distracted wife. But lo ! before the injured youth could perpetrate his deliberate malice, all-conquering genius asserted its power ; the great actress took him so by surprise, and worked so entirely upon his more natural and generous feelings by her harrowing representation, that the astonished novice was so wholly engrossed by her sorrow, and absorbed by the truthfulness of her despair and agony, that his best sympathies were involuntarily enlisted in her cause, and when she attempted to propel herself upon the breathless body of her husband, Liston seized her with such reality of terror, and zeal of purpose—so forcibly struggled against the efforts of the distracted wife, and so feelingly did his eyes overflow with sympathy in her misery, that never had cooperation been more efficient. A tumult of applause followed, and the accomplished actress was borne off the stage by her now devoted and sobbing Jarvis in a triumph of feeling and admiration.



In the course of the evening Mrs. Siddons complimented and thanked Mr. Liston for his genuine feeling and judicious aid so kindly given to her efforts, in the most important part of her character. The young man, albeit much gratified, was painfully conscious that it was praise undeserved for what was but a spontaneous, irrepressible tribute to the vast skill of that magnificent woman.

With such partial compensation for previous (misconceived) mortification, young Liston went home with spirits lightened and professional ardour renewed, to study the character of Las Cassas in *Pizarro*, given to him at the close of the night's tragedy, for Mrs. Siddons' next performance. It is true, that had a choice been offered to him, the character of *Pizarro* himself would have better suited his ambition, for, like "Bully Bottom," Liston's "chief humour was for a tyrant"—"a tyrant's vein" would have better pleased him, but he, nevertheless, felt that *something was to be done* with Las Cassas. The actor's powers for declamation would, at least, be drawn forth by the energetic priest, and in the hearing too of *Mrs. Siddons*, who might be brought to do him full justice,—a consummation devoutly to be wished by this worshipper of Melpomene.

"Art hides the smoke, till Time displays the fire."

And the youthful enthusiast, mindful of this princi-

ple, warily resolved not *to let out his play* at the rehearsal, lest he should again be taken aback and superciliously advised and depressed, and his tragic genius stinted and kept under ; he therefore took shrewd advantage of the short time allotted for the study of the character, to *read* it only, which he did in an under tone, assuring all concerned with him, that he should be *quite* perfect in the part by the evening. This he thought a judicious proceeding, in fact, a master-stroke of policy, and he went home to dinner in a more complacent state than he had found himself on the day of the previous performance. He was also reconciled to another *old-man's* character, by the reflection that his *Ugolino* would again be appropriate, and he was fain to admit, that it would have been utterly unfitted to the head of the ferocious Spanish leader, had that coveted part been assigned him, for, inexperienced as Liston was in dramatic usages and its laws, he recollected that all stage tyrants were invariably men of sombre hue and *coal-black* hair, nor could he recal a single instance of a stage-villain's head being crowned with flaxen or grey, for your stage-murderer (as if he had killed *time* himself) is ever young and vigorous ; this technicality was confirmed by the very first glance at Mr. Egerton's coal-black *Brutus*, which at once satisfied the novice that he could not, by any ingenuity, have adjusted his only "*head of hair*" to such a part, while there was much comfort in the

conviction, though no one (not *Mrs. Siddons* herself) could find fault with it on the head of the venerable priest, and, for the first time, he allowed the grizzly curls to disport themselves in all their native, wild luxuriance, about his face and throat ; and a good-natured actor, in whose room the youngster dressed, counselled him to moderate still more the wrinkles of the previous night, and omit, altogether, one or two of the most potent strokes of the camel's-hair pencil. Thus, as he descended the stairs in full costume—the young actor felt pleased with himself and all the world, *Mrs. Siddon's* included, whom he now flattered himself, could not be *dis*-satisfied with him, and he walked with great self-possession steadily into the green-room, where all seemed auspicious. Stephen Kemble glanced at him, and—made *no remark* (this was *something*) ; *Mrs. Siddon's* looked earnestly at him for a moment *without smiling* (that was another point gained) ; the rest of the performers—for all were assembled—*took no notice* of him ; and *Las Cassas*, under these negative advantages, was quite *comfortable*.

The *Elvira* of the scene, at length seated in all the actress's native dignity and assumed pomp, on a couch at the back of the stage, and the cue at length given for the entrance of the benevolent priest, Mr. Liston made a stir with his feet, and adjusted his dress and features with pre-determined effect before he appeared.

It unluckily happened that a piece of wood—an abutment of the scene, artfully painted to appear a part and parcel of the floor—enviously caught Mr. Liston's sandalled toe ; and as he advanced with folded arms, meekly expressive of conscious rectitude, and virtuous defiance of the tyrant before whom he was summoned—he found himself ungracefully jerked forward by the specious protrusion just described, and, ere he could make the least attempt to recover himself, came sprawling upon his hands and knees, at the feet of the surprized *Pizarro* !

“ Oh, great indeed was the fall thereon ! ”

The shock of this tumble caused his sacred white garment to be sullied, and at the same time disconcerted his *Ugolino*, which, after one or two clutches, he adjusted before he attempted to rise. A shout of spontaneous merriment followed this *contre-temps*, in which a few hisses were mingled—but, it is just to add, that *the laughs had it* ; and the unlucky wight, though no longer like an American senator, “ upon the *floor*,” but on his feet again, was not the sooner self-possessed by perceiving her, “ under whom his genius was rebuked,” *Mrs. Siddons*, upon whom his *first* thought and anxious eyes turned holding the graceful folds of her drapery before her face, with a hand obviously shaking from suppressed, but undoubted, laughter at his expense ; and the mild and pious priest felt as if he could

have sacrificed her upon the altar of his wrongs, or killed her with a frown.

Silence being at length insisted upon by that part of the audience whose taste was for unmixed *tragedy*, the discomfited young actor exerted all his manly fortitude to repress the tears which were ready to start; for he felt how critical his position was. He had set this night upon a *cast*, and would stand the hazard of the die; and "if he failed, he *failed*," never, perhaps, more to appear a hero. In fact, he applied his remaining energies, mental and physical, to his task; and at the close of his best speech he was rewarded with *one* very loud *clap* from a hearty pair of hands, which, however, drew forth a sound from "*that ill-natured fellow in the pit*" (who is sure to be in every theatre, when any thing goes wrong with actor or author), which might either be translated into a prolonged "Hush - - -" or a *Hiss*, and which was repeated less equivocally at the exit of *Las Cassas*. This was not, in fact, "*pleasant*," though Liston was heard by the prompter to mutter the word ~~emphatically~~ as he walked off; and the next minute Stephen Kemble—annoyed at such a *bungle* on one of his "bitter" nights—caught the unlucky youth by "*the wing*," and angrily informed him that he had totally mistaken the character of *Las Cassas*, "*who*," he said, "*was a mild, benevolent person, and not a bully*:" the manager closing his criticism by observing, that

“ he really feared he could never *send him* on the stage again, he was so *very* bad an actor.”

This opinion of Mr. Liston's abilities was further expressed a night or two after, when the now unemployed actor, sitting in private clothes in the green-room, overheard a visiter ask Stephen Kemble, in a half-whisper, “ Who that young gentleman was ? ” which question was answered in the same subdued tone, but with emphatic discontent—

“ That, *Sir*, is one of my *bitter-bad* bargains ! ”

In short, the poor youth was as miserable as the dullest tragedy part could have made him. He walked about idle and pensive ; and “ Melancholy ”—if not Melpomene—“ marked him for her own.” But what could he do ? He had no funds to enable him to retire from the scene of his mortification, and therefore clung close to the wreck of all his hopes, without strength sufficient to keep him much longer from sinking. But there was yet balm in Gilead ! and

“ Ill blows the wind that profits nobody.”

One night, after Mrs. Siddons's performances had ceased, some casualty enforced the absence of a performer, and the next morning Mr. Liston was called upon, in this emergency, to study the little part of *Diggory*, in the comedy of “ She Stoops to Conquer.” Not that he was fit for a comic part, but in

have sacrificed her upon the altar of his wrongs, or killed her with a frown.

Silence being at length insisted upon by that part of the audience whose taste was for unmixed *tragedy*, the discomfited young actor exerted all his manly fortitude to repress the tears which were ready to start; for he felt how critical his position was. He had set this night upon a *cast*, and would stand the hazard of the die; and "if he failed, he *failed*," never, perhaps, more to appear a hero. In fact, he applied his remaining energies, mental and physical, to his task; and at the close of his best speech he was rewarded with *one* very loud *clap* from a hearty pair of hands, which, however, drew forth a sound from "*that ill-natured fellow in the pit*" (who is sure to be in every theatre, when any thing goes wrong with actor or author), which might either be translated into a prolonged "Hush - - -" or a *Hiss*, and which was repeated less equivocally at the exit of *Las Cassas*. This was not, in fact, "*pleasant*," though Liston was heard by the prompter to mutter the word ~~graphically as he~~ walked off; and the next minute ~~Stephen Kemble~~—annoyed at such a *bungle* on one of his ~~best~~ nights—caught the unlucky youth by "the wing," and angrily informed him that he had totally mistaken the character of *Las Cassas*, "who," he said, "was a mild, benevolent person, and not a *bully*:" the manager closing his criticism by observing, that



before might subject him to equal censure with that he called forth by his more serious intents.

"Well, *Sir*," said *King Stephen* in his deliberate, Falstaffian voice, and his fine eyes fixed keenly upon his timid young subject, "you acted *Diggory* last night."

"Yes, *Sir*," replied the young man, in an apologetic tone; "I did the best I could in it, but I couldn't help their *laughing*."

"Humph! Pray, *Sir*," continued the Manager, "tell me, what are your habits? Are you a *pot-house* man?"

"No, *Sir*!" sharply replied Liston, in a tone of pique; "quite the contrary."

"Then, *Sir*," resumed the Manager, "I have to tell you that, with good conduct and study, you may in time become a *Comedian*, but I undertake to say you have no powers for tragedy—so put that quite out of your head at once. Why, *Sir*," he added, with a half smile, "you haven't a *face* for tragedy!"

Liston was *surprised*! and on his return home, by the aid of a *Mirror*—which he for ever after *held up to Nature*—he

"Fell to such perusal of his face as he would draw it."

He had, in fact, never before considered it so critically, and he was free to confess that it did not pre-

figure so positively as the *Siddonian* character, the tragic volume to which it should be an index. It was evident that the Kemble-family refused *their* countenance to it; and, indeed, he candidly admitted that his features lacked that prominency which distinguished theirs. *That* he *allowed*, though it was no reason, he thought, why they should set their faces against his. He could not but think his lineaments capable of being marked (and remarked) for strong effects; but if, indeed, it was indispensable to every hero to carry a bridge upon his face as high as his of *Waterloo*—if it were an insurmountable objection for a tragedian to be without one, how could *he get over* it? It was *possible*, he admitted, that his features *might* be capable of comic expression, but time would show. Howbeit, it was quite clear that Mr. Stephen Kemble would never let him show his nose again in *tragedy*; his experience strengthened this conviction, while every new trial in comedy confirmed the Manager's judgment, and the corollary was, that Mr. Liston's "more ponderous and settled project suffered alteration," and turning his back suddenly upon *Melpomene*, he fell, unresistingly, into the fond embrace of *Thalia*, whose darling he remained for ever after, until he grieved her, even to sadness, by his premature retirement from the scene of all his triumphs, which he quitted (without *leave*) in the unimpaired fulness of his powers and popularity—a

manifest injustice to the Drama and the Public, for he left behind him no successor.

But for this secession, Mr. Liston might, like the dying Pericles, have boasted that "he had never been the cause of a citizen wearing *mourning*."\*

\* Mr. Liston not only remained some time after in Mr. Stephen Kemble's Company, but became the favourite he deserved to be within and without the theatre, and, eventually, the familiar friend of every member of the Kemble family. In reference to his tragedy pursuits, it must, in truth, be added that, about the year 1804, after he left York, his name was detected as the representative of *Capulet*, at Scarbro', but it must be evident that it was to accommodate the manager of a company numerically weak, and not to gratify *himself*, as the character itself must prove.

## DESULTORY RECOLLECTIONS.

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### COLMAN THE YOUNGER.

It was generally known that the witty man and dramatist, "George Colman the Younger," inherited nothing from his father but his talents, and his *debts*. Better would it have been had he found himself *disinherited* and cut off with a *shilling*, which would have kept, for a short period, the heir apparent, instead of his being forced, for want of cash, to quit the high road of life in which he was so gifted to shine, and hide himself in the byeways of concealment; thus, for the better portion of his life, rendering himself a prisoner, in order to avoid imprisonment.

After many shifts behind the scenes of his own

theatre, where he lived for some time in what he termed "*a hole in the wall*," namely, a room at the back of the stage, whose opening was imperceptible except to the initiated; he ultimately rented a small cottage a few miles from town, where he for some time resided in the strictest privacy and economy under a borrowed name—the only thing he was then able to borrow with any *security*.

At the period when his most ruthless creditor determined on his capture, he with difficulty obtained a clue to Mr. Colman's whereabouts; and being resolute in his intent, and in order that there might be no rubs or blotches in the execution of his resolve, he proceeded with a companion whose *following* could not be doubted—he was a bailiff.

The obdurate creditor having reached a turnpike-gate which opened into a neighbourhood where he had reason to think he "*burned*," while paying the toll he assumed a questionable shape with the keeper of the "'pike," with the view of discovering the man of whose local habitation and (assumed) name he was unluckily ignorant; therefore, after some general enquiries concerning the neighbouring residents, he found it necessary to enter into a personal description of the man he "*wanted*," asking the toll-keeper whether he knew a "*very little gentleman, particularly nice in his dress, who took a great deal of snuff, had very small hands and feet, and walked upon his toes.*"

This, for the most part, *minute* description of the

dramatist's external effects, was sufficient ; the turnpike keeper easily recognized in it the person of a gentleman much respected in the neighbourhood, but the man somehow did not like his present "customers ;" there was a sinister aspect in both that struck him to be unpropitious to him they were so anxious to discover, and he remained mute. The principal pursuer was too sagacious not to see that he should have but little information or sympathy from him of the gate—whose system of *no trust* naturally taught him caution—if he frankly admitted the occasion of his errand, and he contrived to insinuate that some more serious cause than the real one, brought him and his companion in search of the person in question, threw out some obscure hints and innuendos which, at last, struck the simple fellow with a vague notion that his neighbour had been guilty of some flagrant crime "unwhipped of justice"—murder, high-treason, perhaps, or, at the least, forgery ; and, under such impression, he at length pointed to the abode of *Mr. Campbell*, situated on the rise of the adjacent hill. This was enough for the pursuers, who proceeded to the spot indicated, and having contrived to gain admission of the unsuspecting servant, they had the *satisfaction* of surprising him they came in quest of—the master of the house, with his child upon his knee, in full domestic enjoyment. The *head* bailiff pointed out the debtor to his follower, who immediately took him under arrest.

After a short colloquy the *trio* prepared to depart—namely, the prisoner and his two keepers—when the creditor enquired of Mr. Colman whether he would object to return to town with him and his assistant in the chaise which had conveyed them thither ; which question drew forth one of Colman's witty *impromptus*—which furnished the said creditor with a *sobriquet* which attaches to him to this hour—demanding a chaise to *himself*.

While a servant was dispatched to the neighbouring inn for one, the report of the position of “ the Gentleman on the Hill ” spread like wildfire round the little village—“ *Mr. Campbell was taken up*, and was going away in the custody of two men ; ” this was enough ; and before the expected chaise could reach the cottage, every petty tradesman to whom a shilling was owing, came with his “ little account ” for payment, and just as Mr. Colman was about to take final leave of his family—the chaise having arrived—a tall, gaunt, dirty-looking man, as if fresh from the smithy, with his shirt-sleeves tucked up above his elbows, and a paper cap partially covering his grizzled head — (it was a brazier, who had hung some bells, a few weeks previously, in the cottage)—rushed, in wild and breathless disorder, into the room where the distressed inmates were standing, and gasping out, in tones wiry and dissonant as his own work, cried—

“ Here's my bill ; I *will* be paid ; I'm a poor man

with a family ; I won't be cheated ; I work hard for my money ; *my* bill is seventeen shillings ; I *won't* stir till I get it ; I *will* have my *right* ;" and in this manner he raved until *Mrs.* Campbell with difficulty obtained a hearing, which she at length effected ; then assuring the man he was in no danger of losing his money, counted from her purse the amount demanded, and laid it before him on the table. At this result, a surprising change was visible in the man's face and manner. He first cast his eyes suspiciously at the money, as if incredulous as to its validity, then looked up into the sweet face of her who had produced it ; he next turned to the captured man, and lastly, his eyes fell upon the weeping child who clung close to his father, in alarm at the scene before him, and suddenly bursting into a flood of tears, the brazier's iron heart melted at once, and pushing back the money, he blubbered out—

" Why, then, if I had thought you would have given me the money, I wouldn't have *come* ! They told me you were *swindlers* and *robbers*, and I couldn't afford to lose by such people, but now I won't take a *farthing* ; I'll *die* first ; so keep it to help you out of your trouble, for I won't touch it ; I *won't* ; I wish I may *die* if I do !" and spite of the efforts made to force the money upon him, this rough specimen of Nature's soundest metal, rushed out of the room as hastily as he had rushed into it, and



his long limbs were the next moment seen striding, with giant paces, down the slope that led to his little shop in the village.

Mr. Colman related this touching incident in his own excellent manner, to several of his friends at the time, and a more exquisite relation never drew tears from listeners, albeit, *not* unused to the melting mood.

Had not the comedy of "*John Bull*" been previously produced, it might be supposed that the above incident had given its author the first idea of *Job Thornbury*, whose characteristic blunt-feeling bears so much resemblance to that of the poor village bell-hanger.

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#### COLMAN, MAJOR PYE, AND MATHEWS'S PARROT.

MAJOR PYE, brother to the once poet-laureate, was a very eccentric old gentleman, in appearance, voice, and habits. In 1810, after the burning down of old Drury Lane Theatre, Mr. Arnold became lessee of the Lyceum. Many years previously, he had married Major Pye's niece, and hence, a great regard seemed to exist in the Major for Mr. Arnold personally. The old gentleman appeared to

make it a point to visit his nephew in the green-room at some part of every evening during the season ; and so entirely was the Major's interest centered in the person of him who was the main object of his visit, that he never appeared within the threshold of the room-door, without immediately enquiring, in a loud voice, "Where's *Arnold*?" which abrupt demand was not addressed to any particular person—far from it ; so forgetful was he on these occasions of any polite observance of those present, that had the room been void of any informant, the same question, from inveterate habit, would have been uttered—and in precisely the same words and tone.

Major Pye took a vast deal of snuff, and perhaps this habit gave a snuffling tone to his voice, which was naturally drawling and deep—and at this time made its way through an *entire* set of Cartwright's *best*, of which the Major left no one in doubt, frequently taking them out of his mouth "at the shortest notice" for the inspection of his friends—who carefully avoided any allusions—particularly at *dinner-time*—that might provoke this otherwise *good natured* old Major to *show his teeth*.

The Major's many peculiarities, and his unvaried and invariable repetition of "*where's Arnold?*" struck ludicrously upon the divers tympanums of the actors ears: on Mr. Mathews's in particular—upon whose drum few sounds fell unheeded or unregistered upon the parchment of his memory, and he soon

gave so perfect an imitation of the old gentleman's intonation, that he often deceived the performers into the expectation that the veritable person of the Major, would follow the reiteration of his customary enquiry. At length, "where's *Arnold*?" became the stock question—the bye phrase of the company in the absence of the Major—part of it—and was uttered as a matter of course in the same manner, by almost every actor on the first entrance of the evening, into the green-room, and even ventured, on some occasions (indistinctly to the audience) upon the stage also.

At this time we had a very extraordinary parrot, which my Husband (like *Miss Pickle*) had "taught to talk," and which could imitate almost as well as her master every sound familiar to her ear. Thus "pretty Polly," amongst the many acquirements of the day, gave a faithful representation of the disturbances at the New Covent Garden Theatre, about Old Prices, &c. and would bellow out, in appropriate tones, the popular "*O. P. ! O. P. !*"—"John Kemble!—John Kemble!"—"No Private Boxes!" &c.: as though she had been one of the original malcontents, and had nightly been perched in the upper gallery—so perfect were her cat-calls, whistles, shouts, hisses, derisive laughter—and all the noises that made up that disgraceful tumult—carried on even by boxes and pit—and Polly's peremptory "Box-keeper! Shut the door!" must have been obeyed with deference by the hireling of

the lobby, had he heard it on the spot, so positive and human was the tyranny of her command.

But to proceed: at the period of the forthcoming incident, "Poll's" last acquirement happened to be the imitation of Major Pye, conveyed to her by her master, and she was at the time so much enamoured of her new sentence, that she repeated it *sans* intermission from morning till night. "Where's *Arnold*? where's *Arnold*?" snuffled Polly—and echo answered "*where*?"

It is no secret that Mr. Colman's confinement in the *King's Bench* was at the suit of Mr. Arnold. Poor Mr. Colman was therefore, according to existing *rules* at that period, located in the rustic spot yclept *Melina Place*, St. George's Fields, where he and his family *took the dust* from one week's end to another (happy would it have been if they could have made both those *ends meet*—but in this, as in other affairs of life—it was not to be done); so that on the seventh day the cooped up prisoner sometimes, against *rule*, took the liberty to steal a march, and, school-boy-like, venture out of bounds, exchanging his confined position for open air and freedom, and an agreeable association with friends.

One of these had a villa seated near Fulham, and close by, we resided in our cottage. The first day that Mr. Colman found himself emancipated for a few hours, in walking about his friend's grounds he discovered that, by crossing a field or two at the

side of the villa he visited, he could, by means of a broken hedge or so, reach the back part of the premises belonging to us, and desiring to *surprise* my Husband with a visit, he cautiously climbed over the low paling into our paddock, where a cow was luxuriating, in her milky-way, and reached the conservatory (which formed the entrance to the cottage) unperceived by any one, and was congratulating himself upon the success of his enterprise, when suddenly a deep voice pronounced in tones, that gave him a heart-quake, the fearful question of “where’s *Arnold*?”

“That well-known name awakened all his woe!”

And the truant paused—looked anxiously around him, with great caution—but could discern no one, when “where’s *Arnold*?” was repeated with more significance (as he thought) than at first, and Mr. Colman could only conjecture that his friend, my Husband, had caught a glimpse of him as he approached the house, and waggishly pronounced these words only to startle him; Mr. Colman now tried to laugh, and called “*Mathews*!” when another voice called “*Mathews*!” also, and, moreover, set up a chuckling laugh, as if in mockery of Mr. Colman’s attempt at merriment, and the question of “where’s *Arnold*?” was reiterated with redoubled force and meaning. At this, and the total invisibility of the speaker, Mr. Colman’s nerve altogether forsook him, and he hastened back through hedge and ditch, with flut-

tering heart, until breathless and distressed he reached the villa at which he was to dine, convinced that he had been seen and known by some lurking and invidious observer, who evidently made question of his right to be abroad, and acquainting his friends with the circumstance, and his own alarm, lest his absence, without leave, should be reported before he could return, requested a post-chaise might be sent for, into which he stepped, without waiting for dinner, and like a poor frightened bird, he hastened back to his deserted cage, unknowing, till some days after, that he had only been driven from his intended enjoyment by a *Parrot's* imitation of a *Pye*.

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CURRAN (THE IRISH MASTER OF THE ROLLS)  
AND "IRISH JOHNSTONE."

CURRAN was very fond of Mr. Johnstone's society, which, in truth, was most hilarious and entertaining. But the Master of the Rolls, strange to say, did not altogether approve of Johnstone's stage-Irishmen, exquisite as they were to every other person.

Mr. Curran observed one day to my Husband, that "his friend Johnstone was an admirable comedian. Whether he represented the humorous *gentleman*, or the broader characters of Irish life—both of

which, by the attractions of his person, the beauty of his features, the melody of his voice, and force of his genius, he made effective and delightful ;” but he maintained that Johnstone did not deliver the genuine brogue. “ He *translates* it,” said he, “ for the English ear. And,” he added, “ he is perhaps right ; for it is very difficult to represent a *genuine* Irishman to the satisfaction of a British audience. In truth, the Irish brogue is a very sweet liquid—but it won’t bear to be put into English bottles.”

We were dining with this little *great man* at Major Scot-Waring’s, at Parson’s Green, when one of those *pests* of a suburban *retreat* (from whose intrusions there is *no* retreat) *dropped-in* immediately after dinner. He was a neighbouring schoolmaster—an inflated blockhead, with some learning, but possessing neither good manners nor *brains*.

The Master of the Rolls soon found himself insensibly led into an argument with this stupid fellow, who clearly considered himself a greater man than the one he talked withal, and rudely and vehemently opposed and contradicted Curran upon every point, whose opinions were mildly supported by arguments, convincing to all present—but the dictatorial and opinionative pedagogue, whose behaviour was intolerable and unpardonable, considering the person addressed. At length the disagreeable intruder took his leave and *himself* away, having con-

cluded his argument with a very intemperate speech, enforced by the most violent tones and gestures, while the assailed party remained a calm and placid recipient. When this man was gone, the host, who had been greatly annoyed by the folly and impropriety of his neighbour, made an apology to his illustrious guest for the offensive rudeness of the self-invited dropper-in—at the same time thanking the great man for his meek forbearance; which led Curran to observe, in his peculiar quaint, quiet way—

"Oh, my dear Major, there's no occasion for your apology or thanks—I deserve no credit whatever for what you call my forbearance; for, to say truth, I have not forgotten my school-days, and I was influenced wholly by my boyish fears, being quite sure that if I had not yielded my opinions without resistance, the schoolmaster would have *horsed and flogged me before the whole party!*"



## RANDOLPH.

THE American Randolph was a miniature likeness of Curran, whom he generally resembled, not only in features, but in expression and manner of speaking.

He was a *very* little (even less than Curran) spare and singular-looking man, with dark eyes, full of meaning.

“Time had *not* thinned his flowing hair;”

which he wore (the front part carefully parted) combed behind his ears, and gathered with the back hair into a black *leather* string, which tied it; leaving, however, the lower part of this *queue*, which curled, to flow unconfined upon his back.

About the year 1823 or 4, he was the main lion of the time in England. On one occasion, at a noble table, a great *set* was made at him, after the ladies had withdrawn, by one of the untitled guests, who very inconsiderately pressed Mr. Randolph for *his opinion of the English people*. At first he affected not to have heard the question; but upon its being strenuously repeated, he was evidently annoyed and nonplussed; and he bowed his head, saying slowly in reply—“*That, Sir, is a very compendious question;*”—evidently meaning to evade it. But the Englishman was not so to be put off; and with very

bad taste, and worse breeding, persisted in his desire to perplex the "Yankee Orator,"—reiterating his indiscreet question, and endeavouring to elicit from the stranger, opinions and observations to repeat elsewhere. "What," then, he reiterated, "was Mr. Randolph's opinion of the English people?"

The American, thus indelicately urged, after a short pause, during which he gave an acute glance at his noble host and other titled and courteous listeners, in which he seemed to ask their indulgence for whatever he might say to his tormentor, thus addressed him, in a severe tone—

"Well, Sir! since you *insist* upon a direct reply to your question, I shall candidly give you the concise results of my observations upon the English nation, as far as I am at *this time* capable of describing my impressions.

"I consider the *higher* orders *Paradise*; the middle orders *Purgatory*; and the lower orders *Hell*."

It was clear that he placed his interrogator in the *middle* class of his countrymen.

## INGLEBY AND MISS BIFFIN.

Who has not seen the wonderful performances of the *soi disant* "Emperor of All the Conjurors?"

Who has not visited his contemporary, Miss Biffin, who—bearing some affinity to the *Biffins of Norfolk*—though curtailed of Nature's fair proportions, being born without arms and legs, outran the generality of her sex in works of ingenuity, and handled a pair of scissors with as much dexterity as a Parisienne *couturiere*, "cutting out watch-papers and painting *pro-files* with *nothing* but her *mouth*,"\* and, in short, performing every possible thing in the most impossible way to any body, *but Miss Biffin*.

Emperor Ingleby, at one period of his reign, performed at some minor theatre in the neighbourhood of the Strand.

One evening his friend, Miss Biffin, naturally desirous of witnessing her more gifted friend's sleights of hand, allowed him to take her in his arms into a box and there seat her, before the audience were admitted, when, with a large cloak thrown around her, she was not distinguishable from

\* Vide Mathew's *At Home*.

any other body possessing the usual complement of limbs : Ingleby promising, at the close of the night's performance, to come and carry her out as soon as the better endowed visitors had taken away their respective legs and arms, conjuring her to sit very quiet until the theatre was quite empty.

It so happened that the conjuror forgot this portion of his evening's undertaking, and therefore when he had finished his arduous performance he went home to sup.

Miss Biffin—poor body!—waited with much patience for some time, but at length began to suspect that the conjuror had played her a trick, and she felt his slight very much. Anxiously she looked for her faithless friend, but, alas! looked in vain; and destitute as she was of limbs to carry her out of the box in which she was packed, she feared she should be compelled to take up her quarters in it for the rest of the night; but, all preparations for shutting up the doors drawing to a close, and the *pinafores* being put upon the boxes, the remaining box-keeper respectfully addressed *the lady*, who seemed to him to have *forgotten to go*, and intimated to her with great delicacy, the propriety of her going out.

Miss Biffin timidly, but truly, informed the man that she was waiting for a gentleman to take her away, and that she was not able to *go alone*; upon which the man civilly offered to escort her to a

coach if she would place her arm under his. Miss Biffin was then obliged to inform him that she had *no* arms. Startled at such information, the man paused, but soon again urged the necessity of her walking out of the theatre immediately, as he must lock up all the doors; and poor Miss Biffin was compelled to confess that “she could *not walk* out, as she had no *legs*,” at which astounding intelligence the poor man was so alarmed that he ran out of the box, and, in the darkened lobby, coming in contact with Ingleby (who had recollected his pledge—a *pledge*, by the way, of which there was no *duplicate* to be found—and immediately returned to redeem it), told the conjuror that there was “*A Notomy* of a woman in one of the boxes, whom nobody but the devil could have placed there, and whom only the devil (or the *emperor*) himself could remove.”

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TRAIT OF NAÏVETÉ.—SIR JOHN STEVENSON  
(NOT AT HOME).

IN one of his visits to England, Sir John Stevenson had taken private apartments for himself and servant—an unadulterated green native of the verdant isle. Being much engaged on some musical compositions preparing for the press, and finding his time much taken up by morning visitors, he took the precaution one day of denying himself, and thus delivered orders to that effect :—

“ Now, Patrick, remember I’m going to be particularly occupied for the next two hours, and I won’t be *at home*, mind, if *the Bishop of London calls*.”

“ Very well, your honour ; I’ll take care ; ” replied the obedient attendant, as he closed the door.

Sir John now set himself down to the piano forte, and was soon immersed in the interest of his occupation when, in about ten minutes, he had reason to congratulate himself upon having provided against intrusion, for a loud knock at the street door proclaimed the usual routine of idlers. What, then, was his surprise and mortification

when he saw his room-door flung open, and Pat, with his usual smile of welcome, ushering in three gentlemen! After the simple fellow had placed chairs for the visitors, a quick glance from his master's eye told him that he had *somehow* committed himself, but the organ of *potato*-ism was too prominently developed to allow him to comprehend exactly *how*, yet shrewdly suspecting that Sir John's evident vexation was connected with his admission of the present visitors, and with a view to deprecate his displeasure, and prove to his master that he had not infringed the particular order he had received from him, with much significance of look, and force of emphasis, he said—

“Plaze, Sir John, *the Bishop of London* hasn't called *yet*.”

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The following is a *pendant* to the foregoing :

Mrs. CHARLES KEMBLE, one morning, giving orders to a newly-installed footman—a *clod* whom she had picked up in the country, and who was quite ignorant and unpractised in the *finesse* of polite life, told him that she “should not be ‘*at home*’ the whole of

that day ;" by which intimation the man undoubtedly understood that she *intended going out*, but hearing a knock at the street door *a moment after* he had received his order, the man unhesitatingly admitted a party of ladies to the presence of his surprised mistress, who had seated herself at her writing-table in all the security of her precaution. Mrs. Kemble received her unwelcome visitors with some embarrassment, looking *daggers* at the booby, who coloured up to the very roots of his hair, as he withdrew, leaving the incumbrances he had forced upon the time of his vexed mistress.

Before Mrs. Kemble had presence of mind to recover from this *contre-temps* another carriage drew up to the door, and Mrs. K., turning her head to the window, perceived it to be that of Mrs. Siddons, and glad that her order for general exclusion had not deprived her of the pleasure of such a visit, she became reconciled to the recent blunder of the stupid footman, and waited with great complacency—her eyes directed to the door of the room—for the dignified entrance of the Tragic Muse, but, to her great chagrin, the carriage drove away, and *Clod* not appearing with any message, Mrs. Kemble rang the bell somewhat impatiently, and enquired the reason why Mrs. Siddons did not come in. To this enquiry the now *sulky* boor replied, with an expressive waive of his hand towards the visitors—

“ Why, Ma'am, you look'd so *black* at me for



showing in *these*, that I thought I had better send *t'other* lady away, so I told her you wouldn't see her to-day."

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MR. WILBERFORCE AND THE HONOURABLE  
CHARLES MANNERS SUTTON.\*

THE following instance of mental abstraction occurred to Mr. Wilberforce during a session of Parliament, at the period when the Honourable Manners Sutton was Speaker to the House of Commons.

The Speaker received an intimation from Mr. Wilberforce, that he wished a private interview with him, respecting particular and urgent business, upon which he desired to confer, without loss of time, and requested the Speaker's kind permission to call upon him. Mr. Wilberforce was informed that the Speaker would hold himself disengaged for the honour of his communication ; and consequently the philanthropic member made his appearance in Palace Yard at the appointed time.

After having thanked the Speaker for his prompt

\* The present Lord Canterbury.

compliance with his request, the visiter exhibited considerable embarrassment, as if doubtful in what manner to open the important occasion of his call ; and a rather uncomfortable pause ensued. Mr. Wilberforce walked to the window in apparent perplexity, and looked out upon the shrubbery ; then returned to his expectant host, into whose face he looked irresolutely ; and after another brief pause, searched his coat-pockets with both hands, as it appeared for some particular *memoranda*, with which they seemed plentifully furnished. He could not, however (apparently), find what he sought, and he looked vexed ; but the next moment diligently resumed his search, without any remark during the whole proceeding ; pending which, the Speaker, silently amused, awaited patiently the result.

At length Mr. Wilberforce, digging his two fore-fingers into his waistcoat-pocket, pulled forth a tooth-pick, looked at it abstractedly, and having leisurely made use of it, afterwards returned it to the place whence he took it.

He next dived into the pocket of his nether garment, and thence drew a pen-knife, which he looked at with some appearance of curiosity, as if doubtful whether it might not be the memorandum he wanted : he then deliberately opened it, and carefully pared his nails ; that done, he closed the knife again, and replaced it in his pocket.

After another pause, he thrust his hands once

more alternately into the deep recesses of his coat, and after diligently rustling among the voluminous papers therein deposited, he abruptly drew out his right hand filled with bits (chips) of broken biscuit, which his eyes dwelt upon with something like surprise, but which he nevertheless, with seeming unconsciousness, proceeded to eat ; and having nibbled and munched them entirely, he seemed with them to have swallowed all recollection of his original object in courting the Speaker's attention, and occupying his time ; for now the absent man proceeded to take a brisk and cordial leave, and actually departed, as if the business on which he came had been duly and satisfactorily discussed and settled with the Speaker, to whom he never at any future time explained the subject, or even alluded to it.

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#### THEODORE HOOK'S HOAXES.

THE first practical hoax of any magnitude of which the youthful Theodore Hook was *guilty*—and which not only made the greatest stir at the time, and left a stronger impression upon the public than any sub-

sequent one—took its rise from some real or suspected offence, of which my Husband complained, and related to his young friend.

This was enough for the aching void which is ever felt by the unemployed, for excitement, and Theodore declared the trespass *must be avenged!*—"But how? when? where?" Time will answer these questions.

Away ran Theodore to his residence in Charlotte Street, a short distance only from our dwelling which was opposite to the *British Museum*, and in a shorter space of time than I can venture to hope might be believed—he returned, accompanied by a servant bearing an enormous bundle of something tied up in a table-cover. This bundle being deposited in the drawing-room, and the servant sent away, the contents were spread upon the carpet with a roguish chuckle, and were found to consist of, at least, *two hundred* notes, directed, but not sealed.

"What are they for?" was the first question from the astonished witness. "You shall *hear*," was the answer of the mischievous Theodore, who proceeded to read in succession the greater number of them, till laughter held no bounds, and his hearers were compelled to cry "*Hold!—enough!*"

In fact, the advertisements of, at least, a week past, had been answered by this wicked wight, by which it appeared, that every thing *lost* had been

found by Mr. — of *Bedford Street*. Every thing *found* had been lost by Mr. — of *Bedford Street*. Every servant wanting a place, was sure to find an excellent one in the family of Mr. — of *Bedford Street*. If money was to be *borrowed*, it would be lent on the most liberal terms, by Mr. — of *Bedford Street*. If money was to be *lent*, it would be borrowed, on most advantageous interest, by Mr. — of *Bedford Street*.

In short, to enumerate what might be applicable or interesting to Mr. —, of *Bedford Street*, would occupy a volume; and charging his person in every part, as Filch does with other material, this determined hoaxter set forth to drop his missives into the post-offices of various neighbourhoods, a task which kept him out of bed the greater portion of the night. Meanwhile, *Vertumnus*, the god of Tradesmen, closed his eyes, and dreamt not what befel—neither was he awake even to the *thoughts* of *Theodore*; the consequence was, that at one o'clock on the following day, punctual as a lover, came each expectant (unexpected) to the house indicated.

There might be seen *honest men* leading the animals they had *found*, expecting their reward, (though not their *due*); and disconsolate owners of missing pets, hoping to regain the favourites they had lost.

Men and maids, whose name was *legion*, eager for “*sitiuations*,”—congregated in such numbers,

that there was not a place left, and my Husband, dismayed, dreaded that popular resentment might make the joke a serious one—for not only had the newspapers suggested subjects for requisition to the sole “contriver of these harms,” but his own imagination had supplied wholesale orders for sundry kinds of goods, as part and parcels of the day’s plan. And by and bye came carts, with large teams, dragging their slow length along with many a chaldron of coal, labouring up the narrow slanting street, followed by piano forte carriages—crates of china and glass—caravans laden with unrevealed property—rolls of carpetting—potatoes and firewood in immense quantities—trays of turtle—bags of flour—packages of flannel and linen—packing cases and trunks, of every dimension—chariots and horses—asses—dogs—brewers’ drays and butchers’ trays—confectionary and books—wheel-barrows, and surgeon’s instruments—sides of bacon—boots and shoes—bows and arrows—guns and pistols, &c. &c.

All, all—like

“the king of France, with *his* twenty thousand men—  
Came up the hill”—and then—“*went down again!*”

—but not *immediately*. They came there for *Mr. Hook’s* diversion, but remained for their *own*.

At first, indeed, the early comers were morose when they discovered the trick, and the aspect of

the mildest was *stern* — but for the most part, furiously resentful; nevertheless they would not turn back, and it followed that those who came for profit remained for amusement; and as the plot thickened, the fore-runners of after-victims made, from time to time, an opening for the succeeding dupes, and on each arrival a loud *huzza* from the assembled crowd proclaimed “ a *brother won!* ”

At last a wide space was opened for Mr. Wigley (and the “ *largest rocking-horse* ever made”) in person to superintend the valuable article which accompanied him, and see it safely delivered,—*his* reception was *tremendous!*

In the heart of all this scene of noise and confusion stood the mighty agitator, who with the feeling of a Nero amused himself in the midst of the surrounding havoc, with his friends (the initiated) who were straggling about to witness the scene, and with a letter in his hand, affecting indignation, and denouncing vengeance against “ the *miscreant* ” who had imposed upon him and so many other worthy people.

In truth, it was a trick most unjustifiable; yet, spite of the reflection upon the great waste of time to tradesmen, and possible damage to their goods, —Heraclitus himself had he been there, must have laughed at what no philosophy could witness with gravity.

It was impossible to behold the confiding, busi-

ness-like faces of the people who came labouring up the street, with their several charges and burthens, or to see their persevering determination to get through the crowd, in order to perform each particular mission, with any feeling short of amusement. Indeed, it was surprising to find so much good humour prevail under such provocation ; for even the most furious at first, became, after a short pause, tame and smiling spectators, and each eye turned with pleased interest upon every pair of legs, or set of wheels that entered the street.

It unluckily happened that “ Mr. —, of *Bedford Street*,” had gone out of town the day before—but was hourly expected to return, according to promise ; and his numerous *guests*, anxious to behold the donor of the feast before them, determined to await his coming ; and being a man of his word, sure enough he made his appearance, at the promised time, in a post-chaise, for which approach every other vehicle was eagerly drawn aside, as well as men and goods, to admit this new candidate, as all supposed him, on his probation. But it was soon known that the veritable “ Mr. — of *Bedford Street*,” was before them, and a mighty shout of approbation ensued. The old gentleman, who it appeared, had long nourished *parochial* ambition in his breast: seeing the crowd, and the evident excitement at his approach, suspecting that a certain appointment, secretly solicited, had been carried in



his favour by a majority of votes, and that the popular feeling was elicited by the numbers assembled at his election to the post he coveted—he leaned out of his carriage-window with a smiling and courteous aspect, with his hat off, gratefully bowing his thanks for the repeated cheers his arrival occasioned; and *affecting* ignorance, as if unconscious of any lofty aspirings (much less a belief of their realization), modestly inquired, “Why such an assemblage had been convened, and how he had merited the popular notice with which he was honoured?”

Here another stunning huzza! followed by a peal of laughter, ensued. But, alas! the hero of the day soon hid his diminished head; for descending from his chaise, and entering his house, his family explained the embarrassment they were under; and poor “Mr. —, of Bedford Street,” “mourning the hopes that left him,” ordered his doors and shutters to be closed; and the mob, finding all their *pleasure* at an end, crawled back to their respective masters, “to report progress, and ask leave to *sit*”—and rest themselves for the remainder of the day.

Several imitations of this celebrated hoax followed, and were of *course* ascribed to the same perpetrator, who could have proved an *alibi* on each occasion, being then on his voyage, or actually resident, at the *Mauritius*. In truth, the hoax in Berners Street was designed and executed by a young gentleman, now a high, and one of the most rigid

Churchmen in the kingdom ; but the secret of his "green and salad days" confided to me, is safe as it has ever been. Yet it is fair to say, that in the commission of this act, Theodore's conscience, like that of the o'ercharged *Osmond's*, was "lighter by a crime."

Many a year elapsed ere Mr. Hook returned to England when—like the *Tom King* of *Tonson* celebrity—he doubtless recollected many a mischief-loving incident as he moved about the localities of his former pranks.

One day, dining with a friend, Theodore saw opposite to him at table an old gentleman, who could not disguise his delight in the society of Mr. Hook, whose glow of wit and animal spirits were unsubdued by absence, and after dinner, to Theodore's surprise, the pleasant old man related to the company, but more particularly to *Mr. Hook*, the scene in Bedford Street, which account was given with many ingenious additions and exaggerations, that certainly spoke more for the old gentleman's power of invention than his addiction to matter-of-fact, besides proving to the Hoaxer that he *might* have made *more* of the day than he *did*.

When his narration was finished, the good-humoured old man, who had thus presented to Theodore a *réchauffé* of his *mets favori*, addressed himself to the somewhat embarrassed wag, saying—

"I was afterwards told that *you*, Sir, were the projector and perpetrator of this hoax, but I *never believed* it, for, as I had not the honour of your

acquaintance, and could never have fallen under your notice, it was impossible you could have given yourself so much trouble on my account. Will you, my dear Sir, allow me to take a glass of wine with you, and to become better acquainted?"\*

Another of the youthful Theodore's wild impulses occurred while walking one day with a friend in Oxford Street.

He observed in the window of a petty jeweller's shop a square black enamel, framed, on which appeared, in gilt letters, addressed to the fair perambulators, the following stimulating preliminary to the purchase of some showy pendants which hung temptingly near,

*"Ladies' Ears Bored."*

This was enough. Theodore dragged his companion into the shop, where a little dapper man smiled behind the counter, rubbing his hands with glee at the approach of what he deemed two advantageous customers.

"Pray, Sir," asked Hook, in a very grave tone

\* That revived and most unaccountable fancy for twisting off knockers, and wringing off bell handles, I believe, originated with Theodore Hook, in his boyish idleness and love of mischief, for one morning, about the year 1808, Mr. Mathews going up stairs into his friend's dressing-room, was shown by him a large trunk filled with those iron trophies of his own mischievous metal, collected in the space of a few weeks.

of voice, and serious countenance, "are *you* the *master* of this shop?"

A ready bow, and a smart "Yes, Sir," satisfied the questioner upon this material point.

"Then," added he, sternly, "be so good as to tell me what you mean by that placard placed in your window?"

"What, *this*, Sir?" asked the man, taking the enamel out of the window.

"Yes; *that*;" replied Hook, with added severity of tone and manner.

"Oh, Sir!"—and the little man half smiled at the ignorance of the enquirer—"the *meaning* is very plain, Sir."

"What!" said Hook, affecting incredulity, "Do you really mean to say that *you*, or any person under your roof, can be *serious* in such a thing as that notice bespeaks?"

"Oh, dear, *yes*, Sir! I assure you, it's done very often!"

"*What!!!*" exclaimed Hook, with added surprise and equal horror, "Do you mean to assert that *men*—*Englishmen* are capable of boring ladies' ears?"

"Dear me, Sir; it's very common, I assure you!" said the poor man, unconscious of the *double truth* of his assertion; "I've bored *dozens* in my time."

"*How!*" cried out Hook, in a voice that made the little jeweller jump, "and you tell this, with an

unblushing countenance," adding, with redoubled horror, not unmixed with wrath—

"How *dare* you, Sir, bore ladies' ears?"

"La, Sir!" faltered the little cockney, looking timidly and at his strange visiter, as though he began to doubt his sanity.—"La, Sir! the ladies *likes* it Sir! they couldn't have *h-earings*, you know, without it!"

"*Hearings*! exclaimed Hook in a voice of disgust, adding with determination, "*hearings* or *no hearings*, no lady's ears shall be bored if *I* can help it, and—I have only to say, Sir. *If-you-don't-take-that-notice-out-of-your-window*, I'll break every pane of glass in it, and moreover, if I, by any chance—and I shall have my eye upon you—discover that you *bore* any more *ladies' ears*, I'll break every bone in your skin. *Bore ladies' ears! monstrous!!*" (and turning to his friend with a shudder, he asked) "did you ever hear anything so *horrible*?"

The poor man now faintly attempted to speak, as if about to remonstrate against this undue interference and tyranny, but Hook would not listen—and reiterated in a more violent tone of horror and disgust, his intention—informing the little ear-piercer (who was pale as his shirt, and whose very frill seemed to stand on end, with amazement—not unmixed with fear of the alarming person before him)—that he should pass by his shop in the morning—indeed, *every morning for the next twelve months*, and if he ever detected (or heard of) that barbarous

little black agent of premeditated mischief in the window again, he would not leave a whole bone in his body. Here quitting the shop with a look of dreadful determination, he left the poor, terrified jeweller motionless with surprise and alarm.

The next day, and the next, the friends together and severally, passed the same window, but the enamel was *no longer there!* neither did it appear any more, at least, for some weeks; after which, becoming weary of the monotonous pursuit, Hook gave up his observation, and left the little jeweller to pursue his *boring* propensities in peace.

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BLISSET (THE BATH COMEDIAN).

MR. BLISSET was a richly humorous comedian. He was rotund in person, rubicund in face, and nature seemed to have pointed him out to Thalia as an actor formed in her merriest vein. Like many other children of Thespis, he was an oddity in private as well as public life, and comical, without effort, in both.

Mr. Blisset had framed for his own use a brief num-

ber of original words, *nouns*, which the accustomed ear could translate and apply the meaning. Though these words were few, *one*—like each article of the Duke Aranza's cottage furniture — serving many purposes, and alike useful to all, were mixed up with Mr. Blisset's general phraseology, and were employed in every affair of life, whether of serious or comic import, in jest and earnest, in good or bad temper, in pleasure or pain.

Mr. Blisset, after a long life spent in Bath, from which place he refused to be tempted, though frequently solicited by the London Managers to come to London—in 1803, when Mr. Colman “skirred the country” for the best performers to be there found, in order to make up a company, the comedian consented to appear at the Haymarket. But he was then too aged to be capable of study, and frequent repetitions of old pieces could not be expected. At length, *Arthur Griffinhoofe* (the name Mr. Colman always assumed when he worked upon a French plot or material,—produced “*Love laughs at Locksmiths*,” and Mr. Blisset was summoned with other performers to the green-room, when the author treated them with his admirable reading of the piece. In that day it was not customary, except to the favoured few, to give any previous intimation of the particular characters intended for each performer, but to deliver them severally into the hands of the appointed representatives when the reading of the

piece concluded. Mr. Blisset was much amused with the farce, unconscious of which part was intended for himself; but when the exceedingly *lengthy* one of *Vigil* was put into his hands by Mr. Waldron the prompter, all traces of enjoyment disappeared from his rosy face: in fact, the substance of the MS. startled the old actor. Dreary days of study, and waste of midnight oil, flitted fearfully before his imagination, "even to the dulling of his spirits;" and poising the MS. upon the palm of his hand, as if well weighing the matter, he *made a face* which showed Messieurs Elliston and Charles Taylor, who knew all *his stops*, what was to be expected from this strange being.

Mr. Colman had seen very little of the old actor, his own *confined* habits having given him little opportunity of being much in the green-room; and his astonishment and perplexity therefore, at Mr. Blisset's extraordinary address to him on this occasion, may be well conceived, though not so well described—for walking deliberately up to the table where the dramatist sat, and looking into his merry face with his own as serious as nature would allow it to look, he thus expressed his feelings—though not his meaning—which it may be necessary to explain first to the reader in an intelligible shape.

"Mr. Colman—your farce is excellent—and the part you have assigned me in it, a very good one—



but, at my time of life, I had no intention of coming up to London to study new characters, and I would rather resign my engagement than attempt to force such a number of lengths into my head which would rob me of both rest and health.”\*

This is what *Mr. Blisset* meant to say, but “*Old Foozle*” (the *sobriquet* applied to him by his theatrical brethren,) delivered his meaning and his manuscript, which he still dandled on his hand, in his own fashion, as follows—

“Your farce, *Mr. Colman*, is a real *kappips*—but I am now too old a “*Foozle*” to set about such an *innimungoozlum*, good as it is, and I would give up my engagement sooner than *inninollidato* over an *innikapips*, which would keep me *Foozling* day and night, and rob me of my rest for a fortnight to come.”

*Mr. Colman*, quite mystified, turned round to *Mr. Elliston* for a solution of his old friend’s jargon, which was freely translated, and the weighty matter transferred to younger, though not to abler, hands.

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\* A *length* is forty-two lines, cues included.

## ANACREON MOORE AND MR. O'NEIL.

DURING the first season of Miss O'Neil's attraction in London, the following ludicrous *equivoque* occurred.

Mr. O'Neil, the father of the above accomplished tragedian, was not a very refined or well-educated man, although he had proved his sound sense and good feeling in the excellent education he had given to his children ; an advantage of which he himself doubtless felt the want occasionally, though by no means wholly aware of his own deficiencies.

It may readily be believed that the great reputation, so justly acquired by Miss O'Neil, with the prodigious increase of fortune attendant upon such success, drew around her many of her needy countrymen, and "her *assistance*" was oftener required than her means, great as they were, could justify. Her door was daily—nay, sometimes, *hourly*—beset by necessitous and unfortunate Irishmen, until, at length, it was deemed requisite to deny admission to all applicants, *strangers* to the family ; and Miss O'Neil's father undertook to answer all such in person, taking his morning station in the room nearest the hall door, in order to preserve his daughter from the many interruptions of the servants with cards, messages, &c.

One day, poor Mr. O'Neil's patience and pocket

had been severely tried ; knock after knock — “ *jintleman*” after “ *jintleman*” had petitioned for money, orders, situations in the theatre, &c., and he could, at length, scarcely give his denials in a tone of civility. In fact his temper, as well as his time, was *lost*. In this frame of mind a *loud double* knock seemed to announce some more welcome visiter, but the servant, leaving the new comer in the hall, informed his master that he was *a stranger*.

Out bounced Mr. O’Neil, who seeing a very unobtrusive and plainly-dressed little gentleman standing with much apparent humility in the passage, he rather rudely enquired his “ *business* ?”

The gentleman, in reply, informed him that his name was *Moore*, and having arrived from Dublin, where he had the pleasure of being introduced to Miss O’Neil, and being a countryman of hers, came to pay his respects, and to congratulate her upon her great success in England.

Mr. O’Neil looked coldly away from the speaker for a moment, and then, in his own *rale* unadulterated accent, observed—

“ Sirr, my daughter, Miss *O’Nale raelly* has so *many* of her counthrymen calling, that it is quite *impossible* for her to pay attintion to *all* of them, and—”

“ But,” mildly interrupted the visiter, “ I think if Miss O’Neil knew of my call, she would not refuse to gratify me with a short interview.”

“ Why, as to *that*—*that* is what ye *all* say ; Miss

O'Nale has made up her mind not to see any more strangers, I do assure you, Sirr."

"But *I* am *not* a stranger," urged the gentleman; "and if you would kindly tell her that *Mr. Moore* wishes to see her—"

"*More ? More ?*" reiterated Mr. O'Neil, "I raelly don't remimber my daughter ever mintioning such a name ;—*More ! More !*—no ;—I'm sure she doesn't know ye, Sirr."

"Mr. *Thomas Moore* ;" urged the petitioner.

"Oh, it's no matter whether its *Thomas* or *Jack*," interrupted Mr. O'Neil, *brusquely* ; "Miss O'Nale's done *all* she can for her distrissed counthrymen, I *do assure* you, Mr. *More* ; therefore your seeing her would do no good, and so I hope you'll take an answer."

Mr. Moore, amused, yet unwilling through an evident misconception of his errand to lose the pleasure he came in quest of, still urged his belief that Miss O'Neil would admit him if she was aware of his call.

"Sirr," replied Mr. Neil with great ill humour, "you raelly *must* excuse me ; I can't allow my daughter to be troubled with any more of her necessitous counthrymen, so good day ;" and he was retreating when Mr. Moore, smiling, replied—

"I think, Mr. O'Neil, you mistake the object of my visit ; I really have no undue favour to ask ; I only request that *my name* may be carried up to Miss O'Neil, and, perhaps," added the supplicant, after a

moment's reflection, "Mr. O'Neil, you will better understand *who* I am if I mention that I am called *Anacreon-Moore*."

"What? *A—nac—nac—Anacreon*? Och!" exclaimed Mr. *O'Nale*, in accents of incredulity and derision, "You've *done it*, now, Mither *More*; I'll undertake to say there *niver* was such a name as *Anacreon* in all Ireland since the world began!"

At this crisis, fortunately for Mr. Moore's object in coming, Mr. *O'Nale's* graceful daughter descended the stair-case, and immediately recognizing the distinguished visiter who had done her the honour of a call, relieved him from the embarrassing *equivoue*, though she could not, at the moment, make her father clearly comprehend how so simple-mannered and unostentatious a little gentleman could be, in reality, so *great a man* as Miss O'Neil's reception clearly proved him to be.

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#### PITT.

"Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, and did shake kingdoms?"

IN my Husband's earliest years as a London actor, he cherished a strong desire to behold the great statesman *Pitt*; and, in the course of conversation one day with our early friend, General Phipps, referring

to this desire, he promised Mr. Mathews that his longing should be gratified, for he would, he said, ask him to dinner on some occasion when he expected the great man at his table. For a time some difficulty was found in arranging the matter to suit all parties—my Husband having to perform at the Haymarket nightly. However, on the demise of the Duke of Gloucester in 1804 or 5, the theatres were closed until after the interment, and a day was arranged for the promised treat, but to the actor's chagrin, the royal funeral taking place sooner than expected, the theatres were reopened on the very evening fixed for the dinner, and all hope of the gratification intended was fading, when it was suggested by my Husband's kind inviter that he could perhaps manage to reach his, the General's house, after the theatre closed, and as the dinner hour was a late one, arrive in time to catch, at least a glimpse of Mr. Pitt, before the party broke up. As soon therefore as the green curtain dropped, my Husband hastened to receive the delight he anticipated—namely, to behold the most extraordinary political genius of England, and listen to his accents, prepared to treasure up in memory every word that fell from the eloquent lips of the great politician; and it was not without a sensation something approaching to *awe*, that the actor followed the servant, who ushered him into the dining-room where the party still remained, though nearly midnight; for like Norval—

“ Never before stood he in such a *presence* !”

But as he entered, he was startled by a *crash* of something breaking, followed by a suppressed titter, and he found the table in great disorder, the guests silent, the General grave, and the candles burning *blue*; the new guest looked a little *blue* also at the constrained, nay vexed, manner with which his heretofore warm and cordial host received him, and who, without a word of welcome, pointed to the chair just placed for him by the servant.

My Husband's eye glanced from face to face in the fear that he was too late to behold the *only* one he came to see, and having hastily scanned each countenance, his quick eye, long familiar with Gilray's and other likenesses of the Prime Minister, could not fail to recognize, though in a haze, in the sharp features of the long slim personage seated at the top of the table—the political guiding star of Britain, the great son of the great Chatham, the dignified statesman, the observed of all observers—undisturbed by the entrance of the new guest—gravely, and even thoughtfully employed in collecting the wine-glasses within his reach, and piling them one upon another as high as they could balance, and then with the fragments of the desert pelting them down into pieces (the crash and suppressed mirth heard by my Husband at his *entrée* being occasioned by the destruction of the first batch) and not till all the glasses upon the table were—in auctioneer's phrase—*showed up*, did the mighty perpetrator think of desisting. He then arose with

something like an effort, and with a silent bow to his host, not very steadily withdrew, accompanied by two of the gentlemen present.

The much annoyed General then explained to my Husband that the scene he had just witnessed of the self-diversion of his illustrious guest was not infrequently the result of his having suffered too much of the "molten ruby" to pass his lips, as on the present occasion, when he *taxed* his hospitable entertainers in the manner described.

This was the only time my Husband saw this great man, who died, I believe, shortly after.

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MARTIN OF GALWAY.

EXPECTING, one day, a dinner party at Ivy Cottage, two of our friends in town were stepping into their carriage, for the purpose of joining it, when Mr. Martin came up to make a call; and finding himself too late for his object, he entered their carriage, and begged to drive with them a short time, in order to chat a little.

Finding him apparently unconscious of the distance he was going, Mr. Richard Wilson at length reminded him that he and Mrs. Wilson were proceeding out of town to dinner,—and enquired whether they should



set him down, but Mr. Martin, was so often *set down* in the House of Commons that he seemed to have no relish for it elsewhere, and took no notice of the hint given, neither did he attempt to leave our friends, until they reached the cottage, when handing Mrs. Wilson out of the carriage, he enquired to whom the place belonged, and upon being informed, he declared he would enter, if only to enquire after "*Matthews's*" health; this, though awkward enough, could not be objected to, and accordingly Mr. Martin was introduced into the picture gallery, where he found subjects for "chat," which seemed to make him forget time—and even *himself*, for the servant announcing dinner, the little man, before a word of invitation could be uttered, adroitly placed my arm under his, and briskly led me to the dining-room, where taking the head of the table, just as a more familiar guest was about to occupy the chair, he seated himself as one bidden to the feast. My Husband threw a droll look at me as it glanced from our strange guest, and Mr. and Mrs. Wilson (the only persons besides ourselves who were aware that he was uninvited) looked much embarrassed; not so the *Mimber for Galway*. He was never more at his ease; he led, nay, engrossed all the conversation, not allowing even his host to utter a word; indeed, as far as *talking* went, he was *himself* a host and kept every body else silent. In the course of dinner he stood up more than once, and gave imitations of several members of "*the House*," and related

in his wild, roving style a series of anecdotes—many pointless enough, but amusing in a certain way—he ate, drank, carved, ordered the servants about—in short, was actively happy. After dinner he fell into a *lengthy* narration, of more promise and interest than any previous one that he had blurted forth, every body therefore lent him their ears (and if they had *not*, he would have *taken them*, as he did every thing else, without leave). The recital, at length, became rather confused, and a solution of a perplexed portion of it being evidently forthcoming the flighty narrator suddenly checked his speech—which was assuming a tone that obviously startled the gentlemen—and giving a furtive look round the table, with a sudden recollection and jerk, as if, at length, nudged at the elbow by one of the nymphs, who are said to preside over *propriety of manners*, striking his forehead, with a vexed look, he cried out—

“ Oh, then, 'pon my honour!—I *forgot* that there were *ladies* present. I *can't* tell the rest of the story *before them* !”

The *ladies* of course immediately retired; some of them, who would have preferred the tongue of my Husband to the unruly member for Galway, mentally exclaiming—

“ Oh ! *cruel ' Cruelty-Martin* !”

“ Call you this your *love for Animals* ?”

## MATHEWS AT FULHAM.

A SHORT time after we took possession of our cottage near Fulham, we were "waited upon" by a very grave, clerical-looking gentleman, whose manners and address were most polished and winning. He came in requisition of the *Easter Dues*, he said, and feelingly deplored the necessity of high-bred Churchmen being thus obliged, though by deputy, to solicit a partial remuneration for their pious toil, by levying contributions upon their parishioners; and mentioned a pending reformation in the proper quarter, which would certainly render the present claim the *last*. The applicant then explained that he was one of six gentlemen, personal friends of the vicar, who had undertaken to collect in person this concluding tax upon the parish, as it was found necessary to lay an unusual stress upon the necessity of greater liberality than upon any former occasion; not only in consideration of its being the *last call*, but for some other reason, which I now forget, and which I remember seemed at the time most cogent and just.

My Husband read a long list of names now presented to him, with sums annexed of an unusually liberal extent—so that he felt induced by so many instances of excessive generosity in his own immediate neighbourhood to be ultra liberal himself, in consideration of the occasion, although as a

new comer such a call upon him was rather unreasonable. While he was undetermined which sum in the list to take as an *ensample*, the visiter conversed with much ease and fluency upon various topics of the day—and upon my Husband's professional merits—showing himself well skilled in dramatic subjects, and, indeed, proving his great *acumen* upon every other matter touched upon. Looking at the drawings which hung about the room, led him to comment with much taste and feeling upon the arts in general—in short, his obvious information on every subject, and engaging conversation alike beguiled us of our time, and our money—for my Husband was so charmed with his visiter that, eventually he was led to disburse more than his obligation as a stranger in the parish warranted, or economy justified; and the gentleman with many acknowledgments took his leave. While we were still remarking upon the irresistible charm of *manner* in some people, and observing how much it could effect by its own single power unaided by any auxiliary, a neighbouring acquaintance whose name had been conspicuous in the list of liberal contributors, just read—was announced, and laughingly exclaimed as he entered,—

“ Who do you think I met, but this moment, at the top of the lane ? ”

“ Who ? ”

“ That accomplished rascal, *Major Semple* ! He seemed in high force ; I wonder what silly fool he has been *taking in* hereabouts ! ”

My Husband looked very *fool-ish* at this, and I was about to betray what had passed, but an expressive look from him reminded me that the discreet *Harpocrates* is drawn *with his finger on his mouth*, and our neighbour departed, ignorant that we had given the—*Vicar*—*more* than his *due*.\*

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#### MANAGER MASTERMAN.

DURING Mr. Mathews's youthful engagement in Wales the manager's wife died. Her loss was deeply felt by Mr. Masterman who, fondly anxious to shew his respect to her remains, invited the whole of the company (not very numerous it may be believed) to attend, in *suits of woe*, at the funeral. Of course no one possessing a black coat could refuse compliance with the tender wish of their bereaved friend, and on the appointed morning, Mr. Mathews and most of the company attended the summons, assembling at the house to perform this sad duty to their manager, who, notwithstanding his real grief, exerted himself for the melancholy occasion, and gave his instructions with the greatest propriety and precision. He appointed the form of the procession, coupling the persons

\* At not a very distant period, we read of this gifted, but unprincipled man, dying on his passage to *New South Wales*, on conviction of having stolen a piece of *Bacon* !

whom he judged best assorted, to march in pairs to the place of burial, and directed every thing with the same care and judgment as the *manager* was wont to exhibit in his professional pageants. Such is use.

When all seemed arranged, and every thing ready for commencing the procession, a question suddenly arose as to precedence—what was to be the *order* of the procession? — who was to go immediately after the chief mourner? — this had *not* been thought of, and it was suggested there might an unseemly confusion arise unless the point was previously settled. The manager, whose eyes were streaming tears, looked distressfully at the querist for a moment, but instantly after, recovering from the perplexity the question had evidently thrown him into just as he thought no further effort like business would be required of him, and that he might be allowed to resign himself to his feelings—he wiped his eyes—heaved a deep-drawn sigh—and replied, with technical propriety—

“ Oh, the *tragedy* people *first*, by all means !”

The *comedy* people, of course, *followed after*, and with their white handkerchiefs before their eyes, perhaps to hide *the tears they could not shed*, and, possibly, to conceal the titter they could not repress at this technical decision of their worthy and truly-respected manager.

## THEODORE EDWARD HOOK.\*

ANOTHER green leaf has dropped from the stem of genius into the lap of earth !

“ A mighty spirit is eclipsed ; a power  
Has passed from day to darkness, to whose hour  
Of light no likeness is bequeathed.”

Theodore Hook is dead ! Fallen untimely ; for though no longer in the “ May of life,” he had not o’ertaken the sear and yellow of his days, nor lost the summer freshness of his mind ; which might be said to have attained to the maturity and ripeness of autumn without any of its decay. He “ should have died hereafter !” Mr. Hook was an extraordinary man. Those who knew him only from his writings knew but a very slight portion of the surpassing faculties of his mind. It was necessary to be acquainted with him personally, and in society, to be able to form any thing like a just conception or appreciation of his excelling powers. His pen failed to do the writer justice—it never fully exhibited the extent and variety of his genius. It seemed as if his talent was essentially oral, and refused to give itself wholly to a more permanent means of sustaining his reputation. Mr. Hook himself had a poor opinion of his printed productions, and always spoke

of them to his familiar friends with unaffected, though playful disdain, marvelling how "such trash" found acceptance with the public. He wrote professedly for money; and, as he was "not sedulous by nature to indite," never attempted to write until the very moment he was pressed to do so. Thus what he did in a literary way was sudden and unpremeditated, like his wit in conversation, and never cost him more thought or time than he employed in the immediate execution. He had not a grain of vanity. He would allow the commonest intellect in a person he liked to point out any alleged blot or imperfection in his compositions, and, if not too late, correct them under such criticism. Mr. Hook had been the darling of a remarkably talented mother, who dying while he was a mere boy, and his father, then at an advanced age, making a second marriage, an act naturally distasteful to his young son, to whom he had not given any profession, Theodore yielded to circumstance, threw himself upon the world's resources for his happiness, became the spoiled child of Society; and before he was eighteen, his company was coveted and courted by a wide range of fashionable and noble friends, as well as literary contemporaries.

In the year 1805 he became acquainted with Mr. Mathews. Hook having commenced dramatic authorship in a farce entitled the *Soldier's Return*, acted with great success at Drury Lane, had free access thenceforward to the green-room, wherein he con-



ceived a great friendship for my Husband, at whose house he visited frequently—nay, daily (for we were near neighbours), for many years after.

Theodore was at that time a tall, slim, fashionable-looking youth, with a fine figure ; black clustering curls hanging about his animated face, every line of which was full of intelligence and genius. Without being handsome, he was extremely good-looking ; with dark and lustrous eyes, which were *ears* also in expression, for he seemed to hear as well as see with them. He thought himself ugly ; and often with undoubted sincerity declared that, had a choice been given to him, he would have preferred beauty to any other earthly possession. As he grew older he treated this subject, as he treated many others, with a humour that was delighting to all near him ; and in later days was very fond of exercising his pencil, with a power he possessed in no mean degree, in producing caricatures of his own increased figure and altered face, by such means good-humouredly anticipating and blunting the observations that others might be inclined to make upon his prematurely changed appearance.

Mr. Hook's early love of "fun" was uncontrollable ; his perceptions of *the ridiculous*, keen and unerring ; and his desire to amuse himself and others with his observations and experiments upon folly and credulity was irresistible. His descriptions, then and since, of circumstances, men, and things, were curiously graphic and entertaining ; and the most trivial particulars in detail were made im-

portant and laughable by his peculiar style of narration.

In other respects he loved in his youthful glee to divert those with whom he was intimate, and also to startle them by the feats of nerve displayed by him in any rash undertaking. No juggler, practising his varied slights of hand successfully upon his audience, and perceiving the wonder his dextrous ingenuity excited, could feel more triumphant pride than did the youthful Theodore when "astonishing the natives," or his friends and companions by his venturous exploits and practical exertions for their amusement, and at the same time *his own*. In the quality of a dramatic author, it has been mentioned he had the *entrée* of the green-room, where he became for the time the Little Pickle of the building, enacting as much mischief as the renowned original himself ever concocted in the person of the inimitable Mrs. Jordan. Some of his boyish frolics, not generally known, may not be unentertaining to the reader. One season at Drury Lane Theatre, during the run of a stilted melo-drama, made up of magic and mysticism, a gigantic oracle had occasion to send forth in brazen voice certain awful revelations to the victimising hero of the scene; Theodore one night crossing behind the stage on his way out of the theatre, found himself close to the wood and canvass which composed the form and substance of the oracular prophet; and observing the tube through which some appointed person nightly issued the supernatural intelligence requisite "for the better

carrying on of the plot " lying ready, but unattended by the person who had to perform the duty in question, Theodore spontaneously undertook the part.

This happened at a period of great political excitement on the hustings ; and ere the proper person could regain the tube, and at the moment before the demon-hero expected to hear the soul-harrowing intimation that "*the clock had struck !*" Theodore, through the medium of oracular eloquence, blew a blast so loud and dread, that the expectant actor and the whole theatre were electrified by the extraordinary noise, and in the next minute all party-feeling was astonished, startled, and confounded, by another almost stunning shout, which defied the characteristic unity of the drama's time and place, and all chronological consistency, by the popular and deafening acclamation of

" BURDETT FOR EVER !"

On another occasion, Theodore placed himself one night under the stage of the Haymarket Theatre, just as Mr. Liston was preparing, in the comedy called the *Finger-Post*, to sing a song as a Quaker, the air as well as the words of which was extremely quaint and precise in its character. Hook had provided himself with a child's wooden trumpet, the squeak of which he introduced at the end of every line of each verse in such a manner as to occasion the most uproarious bursts of laughter all over the house. The singer, also, being so convulsed by the

oddity of the mysterious accompaniment, with great difficulty proceeded with the song, which was *encored* partly for the novelty which attended it ; and the same result of universal laughter rewarded the subterraneous musician, who, with great skill, gave most fanciful variations to his repeated efforts, for the increased diversion of his hearers.\* Many, many such pranks were at that period of life successfully enacted by the young Theodore ; some of which he has since ascribed to Daly, in the half-true, half-fictitious history of *Gilbert Gurney*. These off-sets of an untamed and irrepressible vivacity, and perfect leisure, were generally performed spontaneously, and mostly without any of the persons acted upon being at the time aware of the perpetrator.

A more elaborate and difficult undertaking, however, than either of those just recorded, was fulfilled by Theodore in one of these idle hours of youth.

It was his invariable habit, whether engaged formally, or destined to take a chop alone at a coffee-house, or an unceremonious dinner with a friend, to put on a dinner-dress, which in that day rigorously demanded shoes : neither boots with their shining (then *unknown*) adjunct patent blacking, nor blacksilk neck-cloths, being, as now, admitted into an evening drawing-room.

\* Besides Mr. Hook's skill with his pencil, he was a good and practical musician on several instruments, and sang with great taste and sweetness.

It happened one winter's day, that Theodore had made up his mind to dine *tête-à-tête* with a bachelor friend, who, it was understood, was to be found at home always on a particular day of the week ; and arriving at the house of this friend, to whom we will on this occasion lend the name of Perkins, he found him prepared to step into a hackney-coach, to attend a dinner engagement elsewhere.

Theodore, quite upset in his plan by this untoward arrangement, entered the coach with Mr. Perkins, inquiring, as they drove off, whither he was going, with the view of accompanying him in his visit, if to the house of any mutual friend ; for Theodore had reason to know that he would be welcomed with gladness wherever he was known.

It, however, happened that Perkins was going to a more formal engagement than Hook chose to partake in ; and the rain pouring hard at the moment, the dinnerless wight was puzzled what to do with himself,—sportively declaring, however, that he would stop *somewhere* to dine, before Perkins was set down at *his* destination ; and just as he made this declaration, the crawling Hack passed a genteel-looking house, where, by the fire-light in the dining-room (the curtains of which had not yet been closed), a table was laid with about a dozen covers ; and Hook, remarking that it looked very *inviting*, put his head out of the window of the coach, crying, “ Stop, stop !” adding, as he turned

to his friend, "I'll dine *here*;" and instantly prepared to alight, as the coachman let down the steps.

"What!" inquired Perkins, "do you, then, know the people who live there?"

"Oh, no!" replied Theodore, with his droll, murmuring chuckle of a laugh, "I haven't the remotest idea who they may *be*; but I'll *dine* with them, nevertheless. I dare say they'll have no objection; so call for me on your return home, and you will find me snugly domiciled."

"Nonsense!" exclaimed his incredulous friend; "you would not think of introducing yourself in such a manner to strangers? I won't believe you have nerve for such a proceeding."

This was enough. Perkins's doubt acted as a challenge. Theodore's mind was made up to "the sticking-place;" and a wager's risk decided the point. He promised Perkins that he would not only dine at the house in question, but make it indisputable to his friend, if he would call for him on his return home, that he had not previously known the owner of the house. "Inquire for me," said Hook, "on your way back, and you will find me." He then descended, and immediately knocked at the door of the house, where his friend, in utter amazement, saw the intruder enter, and then drove off.

At the time fixed, Mr. Perkins stopped again at the door which he had seen close upon his adventurous friend a few hours before, and timidly in-

quiring whether "Mr. Hook was there," he was respectfully requested to alight, and forthwith ushered up-stairs ; at the top of which he was met by the master of the house, who politely assured him that any friend of Mr. Hook's was most welcome. He then conducted him into the drawing-room, whence joyous sounds of merriment had previously reached his ear as he ascended the staircase ; and were now easily understood, for he beheld Theodore seated, quite at his ease, surrounded by a delighted circle of ladies and gentlemen, who had neither eyes nor ears for anything but the charming person before them.

Perkins was dumb with admiration and confusion ; but no one observed his embarrassment—indeed, no one saw him enter, so much were all absorbed by another object. The master of the house, however, reluctantly withdrew his attention from the hero of the scene occasionally, and sacrificed his own pleasure now and then to politeness and the new-comer. By what Mr. Perkins elicited from his host, he was soon satisfied that Hook's visit there was purely unexpected,—the master of the house congratulating himself upon the fortunate *mistake* of Mr. Hook ; adding, that he was the most fascinating person he had ever known. And by degrees, Mr. Perkins became informed of the process by which his friend had established himself within the house.

It appeared that on the opening of the street-door, after he had been let out of the hackney-coach,

Theodore gave his name, with his hat and cane, to the servant, following the announcement of it into the drawing-room, where, looking about him with affected surprise, of which the host and hostess evidently partook in no small degree, he inquired whether he was not in the house of Mr. —— ? and was immediately answered in the negative.

“ Bless me !” cried the astonished youth, “ surely I’ve made no mistake ! This is No. 8 ?”

“ Assuredly, that *was* the number ?”

“ And this is —— Street, is it not ?” further inquired the *unconscious* stranger.

“ Oh, certainly,” was the response.

“ And does not Mr. —— live here ?”

He was again answered in the negative.

“ How very extraordinary !” exclaimed Theodore.

“ If, then, he does not live here, I have forgotten the street in which my friend’s note mentioned he had taken a house. What a dilemma ! I must give up all hope of finding him out to-day. He’s at this moment, doubtless, waiting dinner for me ; and wait he must, for I haven’t the slightest recollection of his address, if this be not it. Unfortunately, too, the carriage that set me down has driven off with a friend, whom I requested to take me up again on his way home at night. Very awkward, indeed !”

Many apologies succeeded this *unlooked-for* embarrassment, and were met with as many polite assurances from the master of the house that there



was no occasion for them. Hook requested, perceiving, as he said, that it still *poured with rain*, that a servant might be permitted to call him a coach; and in the interval the intruder talked very pleasantly, *so* pleasantly, that before the coach arrived, the gentleman of the house having *telegraphed* with his wife, and been answered satisfactorily in the same manner—just as Hook requested the additional favour that a message might be delivered to his friend Perkins when he called, to account to him for not meeting him there; and was retreating with a graceful bow, the master of the house interposed a polite hope that, as all chance of Mr. Hook's engagement being fulfilled was out of the question, he would honour him by taking a seat at his dinner-table on that occasion, and await his friend's arrival, who doubtless would be much disappointed at not finding him there.

To this hospitable proposal the modest Theodore offered some faint scruples; but at length hesitatingly assented, after a more earnest entreaty, seconded by the handsome mistress of the house; and the unexpected guest, with the hospitable lady on his arm, descended in secret triumph to the dinner-room, where it is sufficient to say the guest rapidly developed his engaging powers, and ultimately won all hearts.

The ladies tardily quitted the table, with visible reluctance; the gentlemen remained at it longer than courtesy to the drawing-room expectants jus-

tified. Theodore's wit flew about like diamond-sparks, and lighted up by its hilarious influence all eyes with joyous admiration and delight ; and before he and his friend left the house, he riveted the affections of all present, by rehearsing, in extemporaneous verse (for which he possessed such wonderful facility), to a lively air, the incidents of his eventful visit, amazing and enrapturing his hospitable entertainers and their friends by his wonderful talents and engaging manners ; and as he took his leave, they all crowded round him with even affectionate *adieux* ; while his host and hostess declared this accident to have been the most fortunate of their lives ; at the same time begging Mr. Hook to consider them his fast friends, and to *drop in* upon them, when not more formally invited, as he had by *chance* done that lucky day.

Many such instances as the foregoing might be told, did not limited time preclude further relations of Mr. Hook's wondrous power, not only in the manner described, but at all periods and occasions of his life, in not only making friends of strangers, but of converting even prejudice into partiality.

Mr. Hook's memory was always miraculous. When about eighteen, he undertook for a wager to repeat the names and trades upon the shop-fronts situated on one side of Oxford Street, after passing down a certain portion of it. This undertaking he accomplished, failing only in the due succession of one house. But it being afterwards observed by

one of the party, that Mr. Hook might possibly have been partially acquainted with the shops previously, he engaged, after the perusal of the front page of the day's newspaper, to rehearse every advertisement that stood in its columns. This he also performed without a single mistake.

Although Mr. Hook had great animal spirits, he did not possess equal vivacity at all times ; on the contrary, he was subject, as most men of genius are, to deep and bitter depressions of mind, most affecting to witness. Strange to say, of so gifted and intelligent a being, he was superstitious to a painful degree. He entertained an implicit belief in supernatural agency, and would listen to a ghost-story with a pallid cheek and awe-inspired interest. Early in life, he wrote a novel called *The Man of Sorrow*, in which this weakness was manifest ; and though, as his judgment strengthened, he conquered much of this tendency, yet to the last years of his existence he cherished many of his early impressions. As a trivial instance, it may be mentioned that he never would enter upon any undertaking of importance, if he could help it, on a Friday. He had, however, a remarkable insight into the weaknesses and follies of others, and was not unobservant of his own. He penetrated into the depths of the most wily ; and detected the small intents of little minds with the most whimsical facility, dragging them from their shallow hiding places, and laying them bare upon the surface with infinite

humour, to their owner's surprise and dismay. He held a professed enmity with what he described under the expressive head of *humbug*—every evidence of which he assailed with all the vigour of his powerful ridicule, inexorably putting the right names upon wrong things.

It has been observed that Mr. Hook continued his intimacy and friendship with Mr. Mathews with few intermissions, up to the period of my Husband's death. One interruption, however, there was, which threatened to be fatal to their future good understanding. It occurred about the year 1827, when Mr. Hook, in one of his humorous veins, was irresistibly tempted to work upon some traditional accounts, picked up, of the strolling players of other days (for the race must have been extinct before he was born), and to publish their supposed "*Sayings and Doings*" in that admirable series so named, in the story of *Gervaise Skinner*.

My Husband had, perhaps, more of the *esprit de corps* in him than most actors of his day. He had always loved the art itself; he esteemed many persons belonging to it; and could not bear to see it degraded either by its own members, or by the invidious report of the prejudiced or ill-natured. To find his "own familiar friend" the agent of vulgar calumny against it, shocked his ideas of propriety, and wounded his confidence. He knew that Mr. Hook could never have associated with any

but the *gentlemen* of the stage ; and it seemed unaccountable—nay, my Husband at the time, thought *unpardonable*—thus with *malice prepense* to hold them up to public ridicule and contempt. By clothing the characters in *Gervaise Skinner* in the garb of London performers, and identifying their conceited ignorance, their depraved and vulgar habits with the educated and honourable portion of the community, the author certainly acted injuriously, not only to the profession generally, but to his friends particularly. So Mr. Mathews thought and felt, and a coolness—or rather a *warmth*—ensued. The comedian was irate at what he considered an outrage upon good fellowship.

It must be confessed that the unprincipled and meretricious habits of the men and women in *Gervaise Skinner* are unredeemed by the undisputed “fun” arising from their imputed vanities and technical follies ; and Mr. Hook’s pen was too forcible to need its being steeped in gall in order to give it pungency. Whatever might be the author’s feeling in writing this story, my Husband tacitly resented its publication. The consequence was, that a long interval ensued ere Mr. Hook’s charming society again gladdened our habitation. At length the offender, conscious of the cause, could no longer bear the effect, and the following generous, pleasant, and characteristic letter was one morning delivered to Mr. Mathews, during a temporary illness, which confined him to his house :—

“CHARLES MATHEWS, *Esq., Ivy Cottage, Kentish Town.*

“*Cleveland Row, Thursday,*

“*March 5, 1829.*

“MY DEAR MATHEWS,

“You are now about one of the oldest acquaintances I have (or just now have *not*); some of my happiest hours have been passed in your company. I hate mincing (except in a case of *veal*). There *is* a difference not perhaps existing between *us*, but between you *now* and yourself at other times. They (*on*) say that you have been annoyed with one of my tales, as if any man except a pacha had *more* than one; and our good-natured *friends*—bless them—make out that *you* are personally affected by some of the jokes about the Fagglestones, and other imaginary personages. Now, I verily believe, that if I had read that story to you before it was published, you would have enjoyed it more than any body who has read it; since to ridicule the bad part of a profession can be no satire upon the good; and, as I have said somewhere before, Lawrence might as well be annoyed at the abuse of sign-painters, or Halford angry at a satire upon quacks, as you, personally, with any thing reflecting upon the lower part of the theatrical world.

“From you, yourself, I verily believe I culled the art of ridiculing the humbugs of the profession. However, why you should suppose that *I*, after having for years (in every way I could) contributed—needlessly, I admit—to support your talents, merits, and character, professional and private, could mean to offend *you*, I cannot imagine. I can only say, that nothing was further from my intention than to wound *your* feelings or those of any other individual living, by what seemed to me a fair *travestie* of a fair subject for ridicule, and which, I repeat, never could apply to

*you*, or any man in your sphere or station. Now, the upshot of all *this* is this,—where not the smallest notion of personal affront was contemplated, I think no personal feeling should remain. If *you* think so, come and call upon me, or tell me when I may pay *you* a visit. If you don't think so, why say nothing about it, and burn this letter; but do whichever of these things you may, rest assured I do not forget old associations; and that I *am*, and *shall be*, my dear Mathews, as much yours as ever. And now, having said my say,

“ I remain yours most truly,

“ THEODORE E. HOOK.”

To a sterner nature than his to whom it was addressed, such an ingenuous appeal must have proved irresistible. My Husband's heart opened once more to the man to whom he was really much attached; and it was settled that Hook should come to the cottage the following day. He did so, and the friendship thus wounded, healed without a scar.\*

For a man living so entirely in the world—Mr. Hook was not altogether what might be called a man of the world—he retained and cherished a youthful romance of character that was totally at variance with his general bearing and tone of conversation, alike inconsistent and incompatible with his habits and associations; and he would have been utterly ashamed to elicit this inherent quality except to those who had known him long and inti-

\* The above letter, and the occasion to which it refers, was printed in the Third Volume of my *Memoirs* of my Husband—but cancelled, previously to publication, without my consent or knowledge, by the Publisher.

mately, and with whom he had no dread of its incurring ridicule. Past scenes and the attachments of early days, however broken in upon or suspended by the chances and changes of this life, the distractions of time and circumstance, continued to keep a tenacious and remarkable hold upon his memory and affections. During his long term of intimacy with Mr. Mathews, living with him on the most familiar terms of social equality, he professed for him the regard of a younger brother; and at his death manifested even a feminine sensibility of sorrow at the event.

Many able pens will do ample justice to the memory of Theodore Hook. It might well be shewn that his unlooked-for and lamented death is not only a social, but in some measure a political, loss. Mr. Hook was a consistent Tory from his earliest youth; and though—as it has herein been previously mentioned—in literature the sun of his genius “shewed but half his beams,” yet as the originator and continual editor of the *John Bull* Newspaper, his powers were to a great extent conspicuous, not only in the leading and more important columns of that publication, but in the witty and playful portions. Of the latter, Mrs. Ramsbottom’s unique correspondence must be mirthfully remembered by all its readers.\*

\* “Mrs. Ramsbottom” was a portrait from an *original* no longer extant. A lady of title and fashion, known to Mr. Hook some years ago.



Besides the *John Bull*, his novels, and the biography of Sir David Baird (the only work he prided himself upon), Mr. Hook's editorship and contributions added weight and attraction, during the last years of his life, to the *New Monthly Magazine*. But *he is gone!* Alas, Theodore! thou art "pale in the tomb! in the winter-house! Thy friends have bent the red eye over thy grave! They shall seek thee in their halls, but they shall not find thee. Thou shalt come at times to their dreams; thy voice shall remain in their ears; but they shall see thee no more!"

"Tread lightly o'er his ashes, ye men of genius, for he was  
your kinsman."

## LOOSE THOUGHTS ON MONOMANIA.\*

“Every man thinks ;  
I am a man, and therefore I think.”

WE live in a tender-hearted, mercy-training age—in a land flowing with the milk and honey of human kindness : from which plenteous source stream forth precious balms to heal, not only the persecuted, but the prosecuted. In this blest era a sovereign remedy is found for crime-inspiring discontent. By an alleviating influence malefactors are transformed into babes of grace, and a haven of rest, where the wicked shall cease from troubling, is provided for the proud in spirit and poor in purse, those who will not dig, and of begging are ashamed—the *anti-laborial* classes, the members of which—a very large body, have but, in their “green and salad days,” in imitation of Denmark’s prince, to put “an antic disposition on,” and to

\* This, and several of the following *Papers* were written in the autumn of last year—before the present volume was in contemplation—with a view to *Periodical* publication.

“wear their rue with a difference,” to find themselves laid up in lavender for the remainder of their lives.

It is certain that some sins do bear their privilege on earth, and things are now so ordered in this Isle of Freedom, that crime and criminality—no longer analagous—will soon be deemed incompatible with human intellect; we must, in fact, want discourse of reason, and become incontinently mad on this side of the water, before we can entertain a rational expectation of sympathy and benefit beyond our *less interesting* fellow creatures.

Malefactors in other times have certainly “*had their swing*,” but were never so exalted as in this enlightened and philosophical age.

It has been justly observed that the public voice, when it calls loudly, and calls only for mercy, ought to be heard; and “whereunto (I ask) serves mercy but to confront the visage of offence?” *i. e.* to show it countenance; in other words, to put a new aspect upon the face of guilt, according to its peculiar features.

The people (like “the king”) now can do no wrong—treason is out of season, and fast fading from the soil.

“And what’s the reason?”

Why, if it prosper, none dare call it treason.”

And, happily, there’s such divinity doth hedge in royalty that

"Treason can but peep (query *pop* ?) to what it would."

Verily, it is but just, that those who have essayed their utmost "*to do*" for others should, in requital, be "*done for*," and, like a sinking vessel that has sent forth its signal of distress, and fired its last gun—not a shot left in the locker—be safely towed into harbour, and laid up handsomely in ordinary.

Things are, indeed, in a glorious train, and if they progress we shall not have a crime extant in *Young* Old England for love or money, to bless ourselves withal. The Calender will become

"A virgin page, pure and unwritten still—"

and remain *carte blanche* to after ages. But to this state of purity we are not yet come; nor shall we attain to it until minor madmen partake of the impunity which now attends the greater. Every man of *experience* will acknowledge from *conviction*, that what are called petty larcenies are as apt to take their rise from a disordered constitution as capital trespasses. In the matter of Monomania there is as much philosophy in the direction of a pop-gun as of a double-barrelled Manton—in the pointing at hares, as well as at human beings,—the aim and end being in both precisely the same, namely, *Provision*.

He who tells you this, intelligent reader, is himself a Monomaniac (what man is not ?) and claims to be eligible (no matter how), in the *legal*

sense of the word, to the immunity and privileges appertaining to that title. From my youth upwards to man's estate—the only estate I inherited) my ears have been familiar with the imputation of insanity, though like “other indifferent children of the earth,” I was but “mad north-north-west ;—when the wind was southerly I knew a hawk from a hand-saw.”

“That boy,” exclaimed my father, “is out of his mind !”—“My dear child !”—cried my fond mother, “you have certainly lost your senses !”—“That young man,” whispered a friend, “is a fit candidate for Bedlam !”—“He's raving *mad*,” said others, “and should have a straight waistcoat.” In short, all agreed that I ought to be *confined*, and somehow the government took a similar crotchet into its head, and one day, after a tedious examination, four and twenty prejudiced men who were in a hurry for their dinner, came suddenly to the conclusion that I ought no longer to be at liberty, and it was ultimately judged fitting to my case, to try a change of climate and occupation, as the best means of *bringing me to my senses*.

Thus, at two several periods of my life, I was coerced, and it being deemed prejudicial to the public in general, that I should be at large on my native earth, I was accordingly provided for on a more genial soil.

Ah !—I have had my trials !—I am, however, again returned to my country to see its aspect im-

proved, its laws unfettered and free from the narrow prejudices which accompanied me abroad. The brambles and thorns which then clogged and impeded free-will, are rapidly clearing from the highways of the land, and it remains but to pluck up the underwood which yet entangles the footsteps of the humble wayfarer, to make the turnpike road of life free to all passengers, and render it as smooth and level as a bowling-green to those whom "Providence" has *not* "blessed with affluence."

To this consummation our considerate legislature wisely points, and the March of Mercy treads now so close upon the heel of intellect, that even a *belief* in *malice prepense* is daily merging into virtuous scepticism, and it may reasonably be expected that in due time some of our lawgivers will bring in a bill to abolish *suspicion* of crime ; thus, in another century, hanging—unless in the matter of fresh game and suburban bridges,—will entirely be suspended. On the same pious principles, our patent theatres will be converted into conventicles, and no ranting tolerated, but in the pulpit. Every prison will become a palace—not a *gin*, wherein to catch our tripping fellow-creatures and lay them by the heels : no ; *Handcuffs* and *Gyves* will be then out of joint, *Darbys* will be confined to the Epsom race-course. Our *Gaols* will be *Goals* for those whose well-directed aims point to a retreat from the responsibilities and toil of this working-day world,—to which incipient regicides, high-mettled highwaymen, inadvertent

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assassins and unconscious pick-pockets, *amateurs* of every age and quality may push forward in order to enjoy the fruits of their past *trials*. The Golden, will as naturally succeed to the Brazen Age, as day follows night, light, darkness,—and universal suffrage will hem in universal outrage. To this issue it must come, but the good work is yet incomplete—there are still those unredressed whose temporal interests must be first cared for.

Our immortal bard has affirmed that “madness in great ones should not unwatched go:” granted; but why then, in *small* ones?—If our *Tilburinas* are to be allowed to stalk about “stark mad in *white satin*,” may not our “gentle *Noras*” have *their* ravings in “*white linen*?” The distinction is invidious as unwise, which invests the quality of monomania alone in the heads of capital offenders—as if none else tasted of the insane root! So far from this being the case, there exists on this teeming earth a very large community of minor madmen—“Sworn brothers to grim necessity”—whose lones cry out for sympathy and provision, equally with those of the higher crazed, and who like them, “live by bread, feel want, taste grief, need friends,”—men, for the most part destitute of arms, but whose “hands are equally instrumental to the mouth,” and whose moral wanderings and erratic impulses are as little under their own control as are the acts of those who have more method in their madness, and whose legal responsibilities are yet insisted on

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while their "betters" have a shelter spread where they may, "cum privilegio, wear away the lag-end of their" *madness*! Oh! 'tis most retrograde to justice! for who but must mark the wide line to be drawn between pistolling and pocket-picking—shooting and shoplifting—murder and mutton-killing? If, indeed, "blood" must no longer "have blood," why is a simple felony to place men, for the most part "of understandings simple and *unschooled*," under such severe penalty? If trespass on a broad scale be venial—if hands carrying arms are pronounced *harmless* in this land of Cockayne, why must our poor "pickers and stealers" be so roughly handled? should they not rather be pitied than *condemned*? or if we *must* convict a thief, why not imitate the philanthropist, who recommends us to let him show what he is, and *steal* out of our company? But let me ask, is supremacy in crime to enjoy unshared impunity? Shall we "clip the wings of the dove and give the vulture course?" Is the poor petty-larceny rogue, who manifestly does the worst in his power to the best of his knowledge, to be excluded from public exemption and benefit of high crime and misdemeanour, and like the poor ass in the fable, be sacrificed for a peccadillo, as atonement for the innumerable peccancies of more daring criminals? May it not be said

"His crime is great because it is so small?"

(*Ergo*,—It "would be *greater* were it none at all!")



Take it from me, tender-hearted reader—and I have my private reasons for the assertion—there are as many confirmed incurable lunatics in small as in great matters ; men of abstract principles, whose crazed brains go a madding after forbidden fruit (“ pine-apples in frames”), and who are, in the question of *meum* and *tuum*, as obtuse as infancy, which impulsively snatches at every thing within its reach. Such men are irresistibly propelled by *Monomania* (the modern term for what a greater Monomaniac than any of us called by the name of *destiny* !), and can no more distinguish between their own and what belongs to others, than a blind man can separate colours. Such visual weakness calls surely for a shade rather than a lancet. Why, let me ask, is there not some blest Alsatia set apart, wherein to gather up the waifs and strays that abound in the bye-ways of this overgrown state. Oh ! what an entire and perfect chrysolite would this world be, if Justice held her scales with equal hand ! Yet do I see “ some sparkles of a better hope, which elder years may happily bring forth.” Let me gently lift the veil, and peep through the green vista of time—let me refresh my mind’s eye, though with an imperfect view, of the rising Utopia in the distance, where all is plenteousness, purity, and peace.

“ Killing” there will necessarily be, but assuredly “ no Murder.” The harmful Lunes of the blood-thirsty Monomaniac must needs require an occa-

sional victim ; but what of that ! has it not been, time out of mind, an axiom, social and statistic, that the few must suffer for the weal of the many ? Private sorrow must ever be subservient, when conducive to the public good. By the future code of political ethics, how much of human suffering will be superseded by our rectified laws ! Instead of punishment and death, thousands will be preserved and made happy. No more prisons, as I have before observed, will be built—no more chains (or cheques) forged—the poor will be in peace as well as in pocket. No dank and darksome cells, hemmed round with walls of stone, will clog our city's freedom—such cumbrous masses will be superseded by *Asylums, Retreats*. There will be no criminals (no judges of crime)—all will be honest men. No thieves to take our goods away—no deserters to take themselves away : there will be no executions, civil or military. Not even a bolt will be shot ; and as for locks, they will be confined to the rivers : not a Chubb to be fished, nor a Bramah to be picked up at any price. *One*, perchance, may be preserved in the Tower, and open to inspection as a curiosity, amongst the thumb-screws and other ingenious instruments of gone-by torture for reformed humanity to shudder at, and skeleton keys will lie buried in the bowels of the land, like dateless coins. Then there will be no Bars but Temple Bar ; no chains but those of Hymen ; no fetters but those of wedlock ; no “ *Unions*,” to divide husband from wife, parent from child.

Our *Old Bailey* will no longer keep an *Ordinary*, and his dismal doors may swing open, night and day, and hang upon their rusted hinges till they drop off of their own accord.

*Newgate* will be nugatory, and

The *Fleet* will be unmanned.

*Cold Bath Fields* will prove a genial receptacle for those wet blankets to convivial enjoyment the *Hydropathics*, who will there be in their element—(that is, if any then survive the “water-cure,” and are still afloat)—where they may freely imbibe their *aqua vitæ* without throwing cold water upon other people’s habits, and together

“Drink deep, ere they depart.”

Then our *Queen’s Bench* will prove a perfect bank of roses—*sans épines*—whereon our Sybarites may repose without their leaves being ruffled.

The *Stocks* will belong exclusively to the Bulls and Bears of the Royal Exchange, and

The *Pillory* may not be ~~nailed~~ named to ears polite !

Then will our *Bow Street*—opened to the river—be *Bay Street*, and the *Brown Bear* will “take his ease at his inn,” and hug himself in solitude, for no *Runners* will be found in Covent Garden—save scarlet-runners.

*Charlies*, now superannuated, will be nameless—and *Jemmies* unknown.

There will be an end to the *Finish*, and no gentleman, "who *is* a gentleman," will "*go with his eye out*," or think of singing "*all round his hat*," instead of *a table*.

No Paul Pry will seek to worm out our family concerns, by asking a gentleman who has arrived at years of discretion "*whether his mother knows he's out?*" much less think of questioning his domestic expediences by enquiring "*whether his mother has sold her mangle?*"

*Slang* will be as scarce as black-letter, and become a dead-letter in decent society.

Then the *Inns of Court* will be quite out—of practice. Lawyers will keep no terms with their clients; their deeds will be invalid, and themselves invalidated—entirely out of office, and all their tin canisters will go to the dogs, while their dirty deeds will be turned inside out, and be reduced to thread-papers. Then will *Lincoln's Inn* change its sombre hue to Lincoln green. There will be no *conveyancers*, *i. e.* no thieves, no pickpockets.

No private estates—for all property will be in *common*. Hence merchants will keep no ledgers—bankers no cheques.

We shall have *no debts*; no *Christmas-bills* to pay; no *Duns*; no *Waits at our doors*!—"think of that Master Brooke."

But, hold! I must stop short of what's to come, lest my Readers exclaim, with Sheridan's sapient Governor—

"The Spanish fleet thou canst *not* see—  
*Because*—it is not yet in sight!"

*Certes*, these *desiderata* cannot be at once brought to bear. Rome, we are told, was not built in one day, and, indeed the fact seems borne out by probability; neither can every headlong delinquent of the present time expect to be all at once converted into a deliberate madman, let him have his wits ever so much about him; No; Time—that whirligig, which like the ancient figure in the good old *contre danse* turns *all round* in its course, will have its circuitous and wilful way. *Poco e poco*—little by little—step by step—by degrees—great heights must be attained, and it is for us of the present day to work manfully up the steep and make it level and easy for those who come after. We must sow, that others may reap; delve; weed; tear up the tares that have choked our own paths, and leave them those of pleasantness to our successors. From individual care will ensue universal ease, and present toil lay the germ of henceforth rest.

But the French proverb discreetly warns us that

*"Le secret d'ennuyer est celui de tout dire."*

Taking the hint, I shall briefly conclude that we live in "a Mad World my Masters," peopled with Monomaniacs, who are all entitled equally to a share in public sympathy. We are each insane upon some

point or other, and deluded by some object over which, in the pursuit, we are apt to stumble, and sometimes fall. It is a mental intoxication which affects different men according to their differing constitutions. It is the strength of the weak, and the weakness of the strong. It supports some and enfeebles others ; yet none walk straight or securely under its influence at all times ; each seeks a point of support on which to lean with safety ; and while

“ One reels to this, another to that wall ;  
’Tis the same error that deludes us all.”

## MURDER AND MYSTERY.

### AN INCIDENT.

“ Let us meet,  
And question this most bloody piece of work,  
To know it further.”—*Macbeth*.

\* \* \* WITH a rashness that partook of recent fever's wild delirium, I rushed from the scene which had closed upon my happiness ; for I had a pride in grief that urged me to shun the observation of those who were the authors of it, and my wounded spirit longed to “ flee away and be at rest.” But where might rest be found to a heart pierced and lacerated like mine ? Reason, it was true, had not altogether abdicated her throne ; but she kept her uncertain tenure with little more power than to brood sullenly over the ravages made in her empire by an insidious and cruel foe.

I quitted England. “ I will seek elsewhere,” I

exclaimed, as I hurried onward, "the peace I have lost. Cheerfulness may at least be once more mine; I shall find it on the favoured soil wherein that blessing has spontaneous growth, and distils her precious balm on all who need its benefits. I will profit by its healing efficacy." Alas! how soon I discovered the fallacy of my aim!

I found myself, for the first time, in Paris; alone—socially alone—with a body worn and debilitated by suffering, and a mind utterly incompetent to any healthful exercise. It followed that, as soon as the haste and excitement of my journey were past, I became prostrate in spirit, passive in action, and so abjectly wedded to my melancholy, as to render all the gay surroundings I had sought, indifferent—nay, hateful—to my feelings.

In effect, I was unbenevolent. The enjoyment of others, heretofore a portion of my own to witness, seemed impertinent and unfeeling to an unjoyous spirit; and I was disgusted with every thing that did not tend to feed and nourish my despondency. Wherefore my sadness remained, unmitigated—unmitigable. I sought not, thought not of, alleviation to feelings that promised to make up the whole sum of my future existence; and I wandered about in the loneliness I had mentally made the condition of my flight, isolated among thousands of my fellow-creatures. Even the faithful attendant, who had grown with my growth, had been denied to be partaker of my self-imposed exile;—even he, though



not of a responsive class, would have seemed an intruder upon a sorrow which rejected even subordinate sympathy. My bruised feelings could not bear the slightest touch ; and the daily presence of any object connected, however remotely, with the scenes of departed happiness, would have proved a daily exasperation of my present misery. I could scarcely endure to encounter features unfamiliar, unassociated with the past ; but a countenance periodically bearing reference to my heart's bitterness would have renewed its pangs once more to madness.

To shun all outward recurrence to what had been, was my principal aim ; I had sought solitude ; I had found it in a crowd of strangers. And what solitude can be more consummate ! I shrunk from all collision with my fellow-creatures, in whom I no longer confided or rejoiced ; while they, in their turn, appeared to consider me with equal sullenness and distrust. The stern, statue-like coldness of my aspect served to chill and repel any advances ; and those who passed near me made no attempt, even by a smile, to break through the repulsiveness which I studied and encouraged in myself. On the contrary, all observers fell back at my approach : every one gave space as I advanced, and seemed tacitly to renounce their common claim and previous interest in the objects that were open to the scrutiny and enjoyment of all, and to waive their individual right of participation. Thus, in effect, I was the sole possessor of every thing my eyes rested upon.

Like another Selkirk, I stood the undisputed " monarch of all I surveyed."

At other times, when I moved about in public, I might have supposed myself an invisible being. No one appeared to see me. As my feelings and sympathies were obviously withdrawn from my fellow-men, so they had become equally devoid of interest in me ; and I passed listlessly on, from object to object, in due succession, without notice or interruption, while, on my own part, I beheld all alike with apathy and indifference. Hence I gazed without admiration at the admirable works of art which everywhere surrounded me ; and nature herself, artificial as she is forced to become in a land of general sophistication, equally failed to charm.

I viewed without sensation the human kaleidoscope which perpetually shifted its many-tinted varieties before me, as if expressly for my entertainment ; and I stalked along the gaily-speckled streets and suburbs like a scarcely animated statue, without any kindling warmth towards aught I saw. Change, change, was my only aim, and that I could not find. What was new, appeared to be without novelty. Objects, however fresh to my sight, seemed faded to my feelings ; and, to my wayward and dis-tempered mind, that which might have been termed inexhaustible was promptly expended. Excellence itself proved insipid ; and I looked for something less perfect as a relief, which I never found. Things present brought satiety, and recollection only kept its

hold upon my senses. Every link of the lengthened chain that bound me to the past, remained firm and entire ; and vainly newer objects interposed to break the connexion.

It followed that, after a tedious, unprofitable term, passed in fitful self-sustainment, I gradually sunk into a half-conscious torpor, from which no effort that I was capable of making could raise me. My physical and mental powers were again utterly suspended, and I gave up the struggle to outlive my happiness.

In this state I was ultimately confined to the melancholy chamber which my morbid mood had recommended to my choice on the bright autumnal evening of my arrival ; when, being without an attendant of my own, I had stipulated for the exclusive services of a *Garçon*,—a poor simple fellow, as he proved, who soon imbibed somewhat of an interest in my welfare ; and, after a few days, made himself so well acquainted with my sullen humour, that he managed to perform his stated duties in silence : a sacrifice, to one of his country and class, which I knew how to appreciate.

To this kind-hearted observer it was apparent that the confinement to my room in the first instance was more to be attributed to bodily debility, than to that wilfulness which he never attempted to dispute ; and as I visibly and rapidly declined, I at length tacitly resigned myself to *François's* reiterated entreaty to call in medical advice,—a conces-

sion on my part arising more from a desire to relieve myself from the poor fellow's importunities than from any anxiety for extended life, about which I had become wholly indifferent. I was accordingly visited by a kind old physician, who, though unskilled in administering to a mind diseased, possessed ability to raise a weakened body from its prostrate state ; and in a few weeks he had so far renovated my constitutional vigour, as to receive my due acknowledgments and his own dismissal.

The hotel I had selected for my abode was situated in the most gloomy quarter of Paris ; and, as I have already indicated, the apartment which I occupied was one of the most sombre description, placed on a second story, at the back of the hotel.

I had become sufficiently strengthened by the care I had received to exchange my bed, during the latter portion of the day, for an arm-chair ; although yet too weak to descend into the *salle-à-manger*, which opened upon the crowd, amongst which, with the power, I had lost the desire to mingle.

Detained in my melancholy chamber, I derived as much amusement as I was capable of receiving, from a book lent to me by my friendly physician. It, nevertheless, required sometimes a stronger effort than I could make, to confine my thoughts—too often turned inward on my bosom's still existing malady, to any external interest ; and I frequently closed the page which my eyes had passed over, without any clear understanding of its import.

One afternoon, after I had dismissed my doctor, I was applying myself with more than customary devotion to the volume in question, when *François*, "perceiving," as he said, that "*Monsieur* was occupied, and apparently well enough to dispense with attendance for a short time," pleaded an affair of personal interest, and requested permission to go out for about an hour, promising to return in time to bring up lights and refreshment. I gave the required leave of absence to *François*, who quitted the room as I resumed my book.

I had proceeded far enough in the work (a modern one of fiction) to have acquired an interest in the story, and pursued it until the decreasing light and my sight, impaired by long confinement, induced me to edge my chair gradually to the window, in order to avail myself of the last rays of the departing sun ; but I soon grew altogether wearied with my occupation, and laid aside the volume. As I did so, my eyes, fatigued by their unusually long exercise, fell listlessly upon an opposite range of buildings, and in the next moment rested upon the beautiful countenance of a young female, who was seated at the open window of a room one floor lower than my own, belonging to a house in the next street, placed *dos-à-dos* with the one I inhabited.

This lovely creature was employed in making up a *bouquet* of fresh flowers, which she selected from a basket that stood upon a table at her side.

Her graceful figure and agile movements, when she rose from her tasteful employment, riveted my admiration; and I was insensibly interested and absorbed by her general appearance and manner, which to my fond imagination in some measure bore resemblance to those charms which I could not hope to find equalled, and could never see excelled.

I soon observed that this attractive being was not alone. A young man, whose age and personal recommendations were on a parity with her own, advanced from an inner room, and assisting the female to adjust the shawl she had gracefully thrown over her shoulders, and taking up the bouquet, they left the room together.

At this moment *François* returned, bringing with him coffee and a lamp; and after a languid perusal of another chapter of my book, I retired to rest.

The following morning, my earliest recollection was of my fair neighbour and her companion. They were the first and only objects in which I had felt any interest since I left England, and I hailed this instance of latent feeling as an augury of renewing love and good-will for God's creatures, so long torpid—I believed dead—in my bosom; and my soul lifted its thanksgivings to Him who had graciously revived sentiments so necessary, not only to our happiness, but our very existence.

A portion of that day, and the next, was spent at my window, in contemplation of my charming

neighbour, who, with her companion, was too much engrossed to observe an overlooker.

I early came to the conclusion that these young people were husband and wife ; the young man's manner to his lovely friend neither exhibiting the tender suspense and deference of a suitor, nor the dispassionate regard of a brother ; but gave constant manifestation of that secure yet affectionate interest, which decided me in my opinion as to their relative ties.

When first I noticed these persons, I was attracted solely by the beauty and grace of the female ; but it was not long before I was actuated and impelled by other motives, combined with that of mere admiration,—*curiosity* was superadded to the original inducement ; and I was led onward to a more particular observance daily of this lovely creature and her companion, in consequence of the eccentricity of their deportment and behaviour, which were occasionally such as would have justified the suspicion of insanity, had not their evident freedom from all personal restraint checked the suggestion.

Although gaily, nay, expensively dressed, their apparent station (judging from the mean apartments they occupied, and their general style of living) could not be above the middle class of society, yet I could at no time discover them in pursuit of any employment that bespoke the means of support. On the contrary, they seemed quite independent

of any stated occupation, as well as of control—indeed, the irregularity of their habits forbade the supposition of responsibility to others. Their whole aim, in effect, was the pursuit of pleasure; and what puzzled me, amongst other things, was, that at no time could I detect the presence of a visiter of either sex, although it could scarcely be doubted, from the disengaged life of these young people, that they must have both leisure and means for the entertainment of friends and acquaintances, did they possess either; and I could but suppose that the chief interest and charm of their lives consisted in dressing themselves in gay apparel in which to display their handsome persons abroad.

It was observable that they always returned to dinner (though seldom at the same hour), which I suspected was supplied by some neighbouring *restaurateur*; for it was always brought to them by a man who, when he had spread the contents of his tray upon the table, invariably disappeared. Previously, however, the young couple filled up the interval between their return from their morning's *promenade* and this period, with the most extraordinary recreations, the nature of which I shall not now describe (indeed, they were too varied and inexplicable for just description); but revert to them more particularly in a future page.

Suffice it for the present to declare, that my curiosity hourly increased to know something positive of the history and out-door pursuits of this



eccentric pair—a knowledge I despaired of acquiring during my confined and helpless state. In the hope of learning something of these young people, I had questioned *François* ; but he professed entire ignorance of their position and character ; and my various surmises, all evidently wide of the mark, fell to the ground one after another.

At length, ashamed of the meanness of watching the privacy of these unconscious strangers, I half resolved to desist from my unworthy pursuit ; but, spite of myself my attention was again and again irresistibly attracted by some fresh instance of their fantastic, insane behaviour. What would I not have given for the power to overhear but one sentence from these people—one word even—which might serve as a key to their mysterious, inexplicable proceedings !

One afternoon, the objects of my continue interest returned home after an unusually protracted absence, evidently much fatigued, and, to my surprise, attended by a third person. This novel event whetted my curiosity anew.

The stranger was a young man, of a very striking and graceful exterior — elegantly dressed, and, judging from his air and deportment, of a rank much above the grade of those he now visited. Nevertheless, they all three appeared to be on the most easy, nay, familiar footing, conversing at first carelessly, and then earnestly, together, with that

native animation and redundancy of manner common to the commonest occasions.

Their discussion at length terminated ; but instead of the departure of the visiter, I was surprised to perceive the husband (such I continued to believe him) make preparation to leave the room, embracing his wife with an earnestness and fervour that bespoke the premeditation of a lengthened absence ; after which, with a feeling and expressive pressure of his friend's hand, he disappeared.

As soon as the husband was out of sight, the aspect of the remaining parties underwent a startling change, assuming a new colour and expression.

The female, whose manner even at the farewell of her husband appeared calm and unimpassioned, was now evidently anxious and agitated towards the stranger ; and, after a short effort to constrain her emotions, she all at once relaxed into a tender abandonment of feeling, and threw herself upon the bosom of her companion, who received this unequivocal evidence of sensibility and affection with a transport of grateful fondness. Then followed what to my perception seemed a voluble and passionate colloquy, succeeded by another display of mutual attachment, demonstrated by the most violent, extravagant gesticulations, sufficiently expressive without the help of words. The handsome stranger then knelt at the feet of his mistress in an imploring attitude. During his supplications she averted her

eyes and wrung her hands, as if in mental struggle against the promptings of her heart ; and ultimately, as it appeared, overcome by her suitor's pertinacity and her own feelings, she suddenly yielded, and, raising the suppliant from the ground, she fell into his arms, and was once more fondly locked in his embrace ; when, lo ! the absent man returned, and stood before the guilty pair, the mute image of surprise and horror.

At this unlooked-for interruption, the stranger's impulse seemed escape ; but his attempt was interrupted by the now enraged husband (for husband he clearly was) ; and an agitated scene followed, during which the wife obviously endeavoured to appease his resentment, and deprecate his vengeance. Again the transgressor made an effort to withdraw ; but the outraged husband a second time arrested his attempt, and, as if desperate with his wrongs, he impetuously snatched up two swords that happened to lie in a corner of the room, and, flinging one of them into the hands of his perfidious friend, rushed with frantic energy upon him with the other.

I watched the whole of the scene related, with an emotion of interest long since a stranger to me, and which, from the complicated weakness of my body and mind, gradually merged into the most dastardly apprehension. The intensity of my first interest subsided into cowardly fear, and I became immovable and mute,—possessing neither voice nor strength of will to interpose even a cry that might

have arrested the fury of these men. I was transfixed by an unmanly terror.


The two combatants were clearly adepts in the use of the weapons which unlucky chance had placed within their reach, and for several minutes the advantage on either side remained doubtful. Each in turn seemed to hold the mastery over the other ; when at length, the balance turning upon the husband's side, the female suddenly cast herself between the incensed men, regardless of her own safety ; and in his surprise at the act, and the embarrassment it occasioned, the husband's sword fell from his grasp, and was immediately taken up by the wife, and before he could regain possession of it his adversary rushed forward,—whether to complete his triumph was not apparent ; for before his intention could be manifested, the disarmed man drew forth a poniard which had been concealed in his vest, and plunged it deep into the heart of the unfortunate stranger, who fell in mortal agony at his feet.

Appalled at this act of perfidy, and the unexpected termination of the conflict, I overlooked the provocation of the dreadful act, and beheld the death-struggles of the murdered man with a tremor of compassion as well as horror ; and while I contemplated the distraction of the wretched woman, as she threw herself in wild despair upon the now dead body of her lover, my sight grew dim, my limbs forsook their office,—I sickened, and fainted.

On recovering from this inanimate condition which seemed to have recalled all my late infirmity, I found myself upon the bed, supported by my good *François*, who was hanging over me with intense anxiety.

It appeared that, on his return to the room, the poor fellow had found me lying upon the floor,—as he first believed, dead ; that having raised me, and ascertained that I was in a swoon, he was deterred from summoning assistance, fearing to leave me alone in my insensible state.

Naturally ascribing this attack to a revival of my previous illness, *François* now urgently pleaded the necessity of once more calling in the aid of my late physician. To this suggestion I gave a ready assent ; for I felt the propriety of revealing to some person of weight and discretion the sad catastrophe which I had witnessed ; and, besides this gentleman being my only acquaintance in Paris, I considered that he would be a competent adviser and director to me under the difficulty I had incurred, and able to instruct me how best to bring the guilty party to justice. As soon as *François* quitted the apartment in quest of the physician, I was impelled by a horrid kind of curiosity to look again upon the scene of recent crime, and with some difficulty, from my renewed weakness, I crawled back to the window, with a desire of ascertaining the state of the wretched beings who had inspired me with such a fatal interest. They were no longer there !



The dead body, too, had been removed, and with it all local evidences of the bloody deed !

How, I asked myself, had this been effected ? In what manner had the murdered youth been hid in open daylight ? Was the removal the murderer's act, or had the emissaries of justice penetrated the scene of crime ? If not, what had been done with the victim ; where was the bleeding corse bestowed ?

The guilty man had probably concealed it in some part of his premises, until night would more securely enable him to deposit it elsewhere. This seemed the most rational conclusion. But what had become of the young female ? Would she consent to screen from the offended laws the assassin of her lover ? What was now the fate of this frail cause of so dire a calamity ? It was not to be expected that her husband's resentment would expire with his wife's seducer. Had *she* also paid the penalty of her crime ? Had she, too, fallen under the sanguinary steel of her cruel but outraged husband ? Had he dyed his conscience in a double murder ?

Conjecture was fruitless, and my reflections turned from these unhappy young creatures to a consideration of my own position and future conduct in reference to theirs,—to the moral responsibility I had incurred by a foolish curiosity, by which I had been led to become the witness of a crime too heinous to remain “unwhipped of justice.”

All these thoughts passed in rapid succession,

anxiously, nay, *fearfully*, across my mind ; and while I shrunk from the concealment of such guilt, I felt a morbid reluctance to be the means of destruction to two young creatures with whom I had in a manner so long and intimately associated myself.

In this there was something of self, which I could not deny. This passage in the man's life bore a partial resemblance to a recent incident in my own. But his fate was more pitiable than mine ; he was bound, seemingly, by indissoluble ties to one whose faithless nature had outraged him into the commission of a deed from which his calmer feelings would probably have shrunk with horror, and which, should it escape justice, must fill up the measure of his days with the bitterest remorse. I recollected his previous content and careless smile ; I recalled the confiding look with which he quitted the deceitful pair that had undone him ; I compared this with my own fatal reliance under similar security, and my heart melted into sympathy and compassion for the unhappy man whose misery, while it resembled, so much exceeded my own.

For the first time I was led to regard my particular cause for sorrow as light in comparison with another's ; and hence arose, imperceptibly, much matter for thankfulness and reconciliation.

Like this man, I had suffered wrong ; but, unlike him, had happily committed none. I had not in-

curred the inward pangs and outward consequences of guilt.

It was true, that this wretched person had been urged to the perpetration of crime by the bitterest provocation that man could suffer ; it was also true that, in the first natural outbreak of resentment he had shown himself generously and honourably disposed to afford his wronger an equal chance of life with himself. These facts would have been powerful extenuations, had his antagonist fallen in fair combat ; but his subsequent treachery altered the whole character of his resentment, and constituted him an assassin instead of an avenger.

A fellow-creature had been basely deprived of his existence ; in the bright dawn of manhood treacherously and cruelly murdered ; taken when he was least prepared, and most unfitted to die ;

“ Cut off even in the blossoms of his sin ;  
No reckoning made, but sent to his account  
With all his imperfections on his head !”

Just as these reflections were, my first feelings would still plead in extenuation of the criminal, even while they shrunk from the remembrance of his crime, and the conflict in my mind was almost insupportable.

My brain was again confused, and I found myself unfitted as I was averse to any decision. At one moment, I felt restlessly impatient to have a par-



ticipant in my painful secret. In the next, I dreaded to impart it, and shrunk from any act by which I should place the fate of the culprit in other hands than my own. In fine, I could neither resolve to conceal nor make public the tragical event I had witnessed. I had not mental or moral firmness for either course, and in this miserable state of vacillation it proved a sensible relief when *François* returned with the intelligence that the physician had been hastily called out of Paris on an affair of importance for an indefinite period. This gave me a respite for determination, and I consequently became more composed ; and my kind attendant, perceiving this change, was reconciled to my refusal to summon another doctor.

As I remained utterly incapable of moving out, and impatient to investigate the dreadful mystery, I instructed *François* (without explaining my motives) to make inquiries relative to the general inhabitants and reputation of the house in which the objects of my present thoughts resided. He soon returned with a vague and unsatisfactory account.

It appeared that the landlord of the hotel in question was not a resident in it. The building was let out in separate floors to various tenants ; but who the present occupants were, or what their pursuits, he had not been able to acquire any information.

After another pause of troubled reflection, I made up my mind to abstain altogether from any men-

tion of the transaction until the return of the old physician. I was in reality so feeble, both in body and mind—so incapable of self-direction, much less of action—that it was useless to speculate upon what course I might on a future day pursue when restored to personal activity. Be it also remembered, that I was a stranger to the country and its laws, and could bring no proof forward but my own personal and imperfect evidence, which was of a nature that might easily be invalidated by the guilty party.

Besides the foregoing considerations, I could not but entertain an expectation that the immediate friends of the missing youth would naturally be led to make such inquiries as must ultimately discover the means by which his life was sacrificed, and that by their efforts the criminal would receive his punishment without my aid or interference. Thus I should be spared a world of pain and trouble in acting as the accuser of this wretched man. In the meantime, unconscious as he must be that his safety was in the keeping of a third person, he would not think of detection, and therefore would still remain without suspicion of danger, or any attempt to escape ; and I resolved to leave the matter as it stood.

Nevertheless, my thoughts continually dwelt upon the shocking incident ; and even sleep refused to shut out the unwelcome subject, so that after a disturbed night I awoke with an irrepressible longing

to review the spot which was ever present in my mind's eye. Seizing, therefore, the first opportunity, after I left my bed, of *François'* absence from my apartment, I placed myself with a tremulous anxiety at the window to watch for the customary appearance of the unfortunate, though guilty man, whose image now I prefigured as haggard and depressed by the weight of the wicked burden he had laid for ever upon his soul, and the conscious peril in which it might personally involve him ; and though eager once more to behold him, I yet dreaded the sight of so much misery.

While these anticipations and feelings occupied me, the door of the inner apartment slowly opened—at the same time a dimness spread itself over my eyes, through which I could not truly discern the person who entered, although I *felt* it was no other than him I came to see. In a minute, however, the mist dispelled—my sight cleared, and my eyes fell full upon the object before me. *I was indeed shocked !*

There distinctly stood the murderer !—not, indeed, as I had pictured him in my imagination, bent to the earth in remorseful consciousness of crime, but elate and gay, as I had first seen him—dressed with his usual care, and a happy smile upon his untroubled face, which seemed borrowed from innocence itself ! But what was my further astonishment and perplexity when, in a moment after, I saw the young female, the fair but culpable cause of all

that had occurred, bearing about her an equal share of tranquillity and self-possession !

With this outward evidence of careless unconcern, it was also apparent that the daily habits of these people were undisturbed by the recent shocking transaction : for, in due course of preparation for their morning's departure from home, the young man complied rigidly with the custom of arranging his wife's shawl, which attention was acknowledged with her usual smile of approval ; and putting her arm once more fondly within his, they quitted the room as they were wont to do, with light and buoyant steps, as if no guilt had ever stained their path. It was incredible ! Astonishment and disgust at once took place of my recent feelings of pity for their supposed misery ; and I blamed the repugnance I had so weakly acted upon when I scrupled to deliver these miscreants to the fate they had evidently merited, not only for the deed committed upon the hapless stranger, but for their after recklessness and absence of sensibility ! Was it to be credited that two beings, so fair and young, could already be inured to guilt, and hardened to its consequence—so callous to the throes of conscience—so indurated as to be unsusceptible of even a temporary chill of remorse for such a deed ? It was monstrous !

Then, again, the obvious return of love, if not of confidence, on the husband's side towards a wife whose convicted infidelity had so recently betrayed him into madness and guilt ! How strangely in-

consistent, how utterly irreconcilable, was his present complacency with the headlong rage which, but a few hours previously, had plunged him into blood and irremediable crime !

Revolving for some time these conflicting and contradictory effects in my mind, it suddenly occurred to me to question whether it was not probable that the whole of my dreadful impression in relation to the murder was but an illusion of a diseased intellect, the coinage of a distempered brain ? And the fit in which I was found by my attendant, might not that have occurred while I was observing the youthful trio (for that I had in the first instance beheld these people together I could not allow myself to doubt)—might not my faintness have been induced by natural and accountable causes independent of them ?

That I had fallen into a sort of trance was clear from the time described to have taken place between the discovery of me upon the ground and my re-awakening to consciousness. Might not, then, while in that shadowy state of half-existence, my disturbed fancy have suggested the horrible catastrophe described ? My hopes seized eagerly upon this view of the case ; and, in a sudden transport of belief, I exclaimed, "*It must be so !*" and a mountain-weight seemed removed from my breast. The more I dwelt upon the supposed event, the more I became satisfied that I had suffered under a " phantasma or hideous dream ;" and as this conviction

settled, I looked up in thankful fervour to Heaven, which had preserved me from the temptation, in my delirium, of accusing an innocent man of a deed so monstrous. I looked back upon his lovely and light-hearted wife, and again I saw her sweet smile ; and though " nature with a beauteous wall doth oft close in pollution," I felt that she was innocent and pure as her outward character described her.

Salutary as welcome was this conclusion—beneficial alike to my health and to my mind. That night I slept peacefully, free from all misleading dreams or discomfort.

Awaking late on the following morning, I found the healing relief of the previous night's rational solution of a painful dream ; the dissipation of which was followed by a wholesome resolution to avoid a recurrence of an error fraught with so much self-suffering, and such imminent peril to others. In order, therefore, to shun grounds for further perplexity and possible delusion, I at once determined to exchange the chamber I had so long occupied for one situated at a distant part of the hotel. Once removed from the temptation of future curiosity, and consequent misconception, shunning the daily contemplation of a scene of an imaginary crime—the recollection of it would, I argued, gradually weaken and decay ; and I promptly acted upon these prudent reflections. But though I no longer occupied the chamber in question, I could not prevail upon myself to relinquish altogether the right to visit it, should

any new motive or incident arise to make it desirable or expedient to look again upon the scene of past interest.

The wisdom of this removal was soon manifested by my general improvement. My mind became light, my spirits refreshed by a more cheerful position, and health followed in natural succession. In casting off the weight of my late impressions, I seemed also to have discarded with them the greater portion of my previous sorrow; and not a little of my growing comfort was derived from finding myself so happily released from my assumed responsibility as a deputed agent in the punishment of crime. Thus every hour conduced to my contentment, and consequent restoration to my natural strength.

It was not long before I felt able to take exercise in a carriage—afterwards on foot. My powers of enjoyment were renewed, nay, enlarged,—my long-stifled benevolence restored. I once more rejoiced in the presence and happiness of others, and in my own sense of existence; and this revived warmth of my long-chilled heart communicated its genial influence to those near me. *François*, who had heretofore moved about my room as if “shod with felt,” noiseless and mute, now capered and chatted in ecstasies at his permitted volubility; and all was once more *couleur de rose*.

But I had not, therefore, forgotten my young neighbours, or lost my first interest in them;

and though my recollections were divested of all painful impressions, I could not deny that I still harboured an anxiety to learn who they were ; and found myself, in the course of each day's lounge abroad, passing and repassing, in the parallel street with my own, the door of their habitation, which stood open and unattended, in the fashion of London chambers ; but I never had the good fortune to catch even a glimpse of the parties I hoped to see, although my loiterings were generally at the periods of their former movements to and from home.

One day, after a fruitless effort to meet these young people, it occurred to me that I might make their acquaintance by a little artifice. By going up to their room-door under pretext of inquiring for a friend supposed to reside there, I might make my way into their apartment, and by this *ruse* contrive to discover the nature of their pursuits and general history. I was pleased with this little harmless device, which, if successful, would serve at the least to make me acquainted with the most attractive woman I had seen in Paris.

This prospect determined me, and I was bent on my experiment. In order, however, to make sure of the *female's* presence, I took the precaution of visiting my former chamber, from which I could ascertain that she and her companion were together. On pretence, therefore, of requiring some papers from a desk left in the room, I demanded the key from *François*, and ascended the stairs of my late



dormitory ; and locking myself within, I cautiously approached the window, lest by being now seen by either of the young people, I might afterwards be recognised by them as the overlooker ; but what was my surprise and chagrin to find the apartment I looked into not only without the persons I expected to see in it, but utterly denuded, its furniture gone, and every vestige of its late occupants removed !

This, then, was the explanation of my failure on the several attempts to see these people during my loiterings near their door ; doubtless they had removed soon after my last observation of them.

Was it likely that they had then noticed me for the first time, and had been induced to change their abode in consequence ? I felt something like compunction in the suspicion that my impertinence had driven these young people away ; but soon, other thoughts and questions arose to disturb me.

Was it possible that the detection of an observer had alarmed these people, and that the fear of such a witness had urged them to quit their abode in order to remove from his power ?

Was the mystery of their habits and pursuits criminal ; their unseen means of subsistence lawless, as well as mysterious ? Their change of residence ought not reasonably to give me any suspicions to their prejudice, for it was a common and simple act in itself ; but I could not now help coupling it with former observations, to their prejudice ; and,

strange to say, with what I had so recently concluded to have been but an "unreal mockery"—a dream. The murdered youth rose before my imagination in his death-struggles, and all my former impressions returned.

Unreasonable as this seemed, I could not drive them away as I had before done; and after much argument against the probability of the fact, and repeated struggles against my renewing convictions, I could with difficulty resist yielding up my mind to an implicit belief in their justice. From this time my desire to gain intelligence of these people became a painful necessity. The impatient restlessness of my feelings was intolerable—scarcely endurable; and at length I left my hotel with a rigid determination not to return to it or sleep until I had obtained some clue at least to the whereabouts of the parties, and eventually set at rest the question of their innocence or guilt.

In pursuance of this resolve, I sought the proprietor of the chambers so lately occupied by the mysterious couple. He resided in an opposite quarter of Paris, and several hours elapsed before I could find him at home; and when at length I obtained the desired interview, and prosecuted my inquiries, to my great chagrin, they produced nothing satisfactory, and little more than what I already knew.

The landlord—a sullen, stupid sort of man—informed me that the plan upon which he let out his hotel,—not finding it convenient to be upon the

spot to protect his property,—was to exact from every tenant a quarter's rent in advance ; which term expiring, he renewed upon a similar condition. That, as frequent changes took place, it was not his custom, he added, to trouble himself in the first instance about the characters or pursuits of the numerous lodgers his house received, the precaution of prepayment from every occupant of the building rendering any other security unnecessary.

I, however, drew from him that the young couple in question had occupied their rooms about two months previously to their removal ; and that a short time before, meeting the young man by chance, he had expressed his intention of renewing his term at the proper period ; but that, in a few days after, he presented himself at the landlord's dwelling with every appearance of concern and haste, saying, that he and his wife had unexpectedly found it expedient to remove to a distant part of the city, and that he had come for the purpose of giving up, prematurely, possession of the apartments. The landlord accordingly accompanied him back to the hotel ; and having ascertained that no injury had been done to his premises by the brief occupation, he received the key, and the young man departed. The whole transaction was one of ordinary occurrence, it seemed, and had made little impression upon the mind of the person who gave me the statement.

This account, insufficient to set my feelings at rest, was all I obtained ; but I could not help dwell-

ing upon the sudden and premature removal of the parties,—which tallied with the date of the period of my own removal from my chamber,—as confirmatory of my first belief in their guilt, and my persuasion strengthened that I had really witnessed what I afterwards supposed the offspring of a distorted imagination. Every awful particular of the time recurred to my memory with fresh force, and I beheld again with vivid clearness every part of the fatal transaction circumstantially before me. Conviction that my first impression was the true one, now became positive and indisputable—*I had witnessed the perpetration of the murder described.*

But what could I do? The guilty parties were, for the present, at least, removed from my reach. Experienced, perhaps, in crime, they were possibly practised in the method of concealment and the means of eluding justice. The instance to which I had been privy might be but one of a system; which supposition was strengthened by the good understanding that seemed to subsist between the husband and wife so immediately after the murder. Might not the beauty of the latter be the means employed to fascinate and entangle unwary youth into the toils of these miscreants for the purposes of plunder, and of assassination, if expedient? The more I thought, the more I felt the probability of this being the case: every recollection of these people tended to bear it out.

The evident freedom of this couple from all busi-

ness-like occupation ; their general levity when at home ; their daily walks abroad (always together, doubtless in quest of prey) ; the showy and alluring style of the female's attire ; the general absence of visitors ; all—all but too surely justified my worst surmises. I had heard of such harpies, and mourned to find a creature so young and lovely the willing instrument and partaker of such infamy and guilt.

Notwithstanding these revived emotions, I was happily too far advanced in recovery of my former self, to allow them to take such hold upon my feelings and faculties as they had before done. On the contrary, I was now capable of sustaining, without aid, the painful secret, and of acting upon it with discretion and firmness when necessary. Renewed health had brought back with it my native buoyancy of character ; I was no longer pressed and held down by the remembrance of events that first produced despair, and urged my flight from the scene of my earliest disappointment. The shock I had been unprepared for, no longer oppressed me ; I had been diverted from my unmanly and selfish repinings by the contemplation of what I deemed a heavier calamity than my own ; and eventually,

“ From the feeling of my grief was wrought,  
By deep surmise of other's detriment.”

It was true I could not forget that the mistress of my fondest hopes, the brother of my heart, the

woman I adored, the friend I trusted, had conspired to rob me of my dearest reliances ; but I remembered at the same time that I had not repaid their baseness with crime. I had happily fled from the suggestions of revenge. My unworthy rival still lived ; and though cruelly outraged, I was blameless ; and

“ Better ’t were  
That all the miseries which nature owns,  
Were ours at once, than guilt.”

This reflection acted like a healing balm upon my hurt mind ; my spirit rose with it, and again “ my bosom’s lord sat lightly on his throne.” All acquired bitterness had left my heart. I pitied and forgave those who had wronged me, and found comfort and compensation for the visionary good I had lost, in the positive sense of unmerited, unresented injury. I was young and free, and might again be happy—nay, I was already so.

My sanguine temperament now pointed to hope and future enjoyment, even on the spot whereon I fancied all happiness had faded for ever. I longed to find myself again in the bosom of my family, and was prepared to go back to England as soon as I received due returns to the letters despatched to those whom I had so pained by my unadvised flight, and sullen silence in absence.

Pending this interval, I moved about Paris ; still, necessarily, alone, but not, as on my first arrival,

dreading and shrinking from my fellow-creatures. On the contrary, the re-action I had experienced rendered every thing at which I had before sickened, welcome and delightful. The strange incidents of my sojourn, though never forgotten, had ceased to be obtrusive. But it was not unnatural that in wandering about in places of general resort, I should think of encountering the persons whose proceedings had made so principal a part of the interest Paris had furnished, and about whom my thoughts had so long been exclusively occupied. In fact, I was most desirous of obtaining some further knowledge of them, previously to my departure ; but it so happened, that neither in the walks, the streets, exhibitions, theatres, or other places " frequent and full," did I discover them ; and I ultimately came to the conclusion, that the guilty pair had quitted Paris, to find security from the just punishment of their crimes, and I left the developement of the mystery to time and fate.

Departure now drew nigh ; and the delighted *François*, whom I had engaged to accompany me to England, was diligently preparing himself and my packages (purchases in Paris) for removal, while I lounged away my evenings at the various places of amusement.

One evening, having been called to that part of the city on business relating to a purchase I had made, I strolled into the theatre of the *Porte St.*

*Martin*, too late, as it proved, to see the early part of a popular novelty then attracting all Paris.

The house being crowded to excess, I could only obtain standing-room, where I could not possibly see the performance ; and I was meditating a retreat from fatigue and threatened suffocation, when a female seated before me, overcome by the heat, suddenly resigned her place, and left the box ; as she did so, I dropped into the vacant seat, when immediately my eyes fell upon two persons, in whose identity I could never be mistaken. Neither change of dress nor place could veil their features from my recognition.

In my first surprise at these apparitions, I uttered an involuntary cry, which was promptly repressed by the surrounding spectators, who were interested in the passing scene upon the stage. Thus peremptorily checked, I resumed the seat from which I had started in my first emotion of astonishment at the unexpected discovery I had made ; but, merciful powers ! what were my sensations ! The murderer and his wife stood before me :—*They were public performers ! ! !*

Gracious reader—for such you are, if you have thus far followed my wild narrative—let me compensate your admirable patience, reward your sympathy, and relieve your feelings from the load of alarm and conjecture I have so heavily burdened



them withal, by further relating, that after I had recognised the presence of the two persons whom I had so much desired to see again, I also perceived, standing near them, the handsome stranger whom I had so long accounted a buried corpse !

There, indeed, he stood, instinct with life, erect in conscious security and melo-dramatic dignity, close to his young friends, arrayed like them in splendour bespeaking co-equal rank in the *corps dramatique*. There was not a spangle to choose between them ; all three—the husband, wife, and lover—glittered before my eyes in dazzling magnificence, and all the conscious pride of universal admiration.

“ *He lives !*” I cried, “ *they are innocent !*” and the overcharged calendar of guilt became lighter by a crime !

Need more be added ; or does the intelligent reader require to be told that I had so long employed my vacant time, and exercised my morbid imagination, in the apartment of two youthful and enthusiastic candidates for melo-dramatic fame, and that I had ignorantly, as unjustifiably, watched their practical professional studies, viewing them only as so many indications of a caprice bordering upon insanity ?

I had in effect been situated as a deaf person might be supposed, when looking for the first time into a ball-room, unacquainted with its meaning,

and unconscious of the instigating accompaniment of music. Such a person, possessing no knowledge of the actuating motive for such extraordinary locomotion, would infallibly conclude all the parties to be in a state of active lunacy.

In like manner, I ignorantly contemplated the actions of these unconscious *artistes*, regarding their studies of scenic effect as merely fantastic and irrational recreations, because I could not hear the sounds that gave sense to their motions.

On the occasions related, I had witnessed merely *a private rehearsal* of the scene I afterwards saw represented in public, with these differences.

Instead of its being acted by daylight, in a mean and dim apartment, before a solitary and ill-judging spectator, it was now performed on a gorgeously decorated and well-lighted stage, before a numerous and judicious audience, with all the pomp and circumstance of ostrich feathers, foilstones, russet boots, and rapturous plaudits. Herein consisted the principal variations that enhanced the cunning of the scene ; for now, as then, the parties met and conversed, and the confiding husband again intrusted his lovely but deceitful wife to his perfidious friend.

Again he embraced the traitors, and again disappeared. Again the lovers fell into each other's arms, and the outraged husband returned and discovered their treachery ; again he fought with his

rival, and again the handsome stranger fell beneath the cruel dagger's point, and *again he died!* All—every incident was the same; precise in detail, and only heightened in effect by splendour of dress and scenery, and made intelligible by words.

Other attendant mysteries were now equally open to discernment. The apparent freedom of this young couple from all visible occupation at home; their daily departure from it on what I could not but imagine aimless or harmful pursuits; their total abstinence from all visitors (accounted for by their every day and night's engrossing cares of their profession, for, be it remembered, even Sunday is not, as in England, a day of rest to actors); their sudden and, seemingly, unaccountable relinquishment of their apartments (induced by their rigidly increasing duties at the theatre, and the nightly "run" of the new drama, which prompted a precipitate removal to the immediate neighbourhood of the scene of their perpetual interest and avocations), when their exclusive devotion to the *locale* of their new abode precluded the possibility of my encountering them at the places in which I sought them;—all, all was explained, and made "clear to the meanest capacity."

It now required no "oracle to rectify my knowledge." The illusion I had so long laboured under was dissolved, and,

“ Like an unsubstantial pageant faded,  
Left not a rack behind.”

In addition to this account, subsequently furnished me by the beautiful actress herself, be it further known, that the drama in question had provided these youthful performers with the first original characters with which they had been intrusted ; and their success in them was, of course, a result of vast import.

The scene so much dwelt upon in this little history was of the most vital importance to the piece ; the last trial of which, on the morning of its first performance, had not been satisfactory to the anxious trio ; and when they quitted the theatre, on their return to their respective homes to dinner, it was proposed that the representative of the lover should forthwith accompany the young couple to their lodgings, and there go through this most complicated portion of their evening's task,—in fact, give the most critical scene another *rehearsal*.

To this experiment I was an unintelligent witness ; and had not my lamentable state of weakness and misconception at the time occasioned me to become insensible at the close of this earnest trial of stage effect,—had I but remained at my window a minute longer,—I should have had the gratification of seeing the dead arise, the murdered youth leap up, unscathed, and heart-whole in more respects than one (he being in reality the *brother* of the beautiful

female whose lover he enacted), and after diligently brushing his clothes from the effects of his dying struggles upon the floor, and kissing the soft cheeks of his charming sister, take a graceful leave, with every indication of satisfaction, to be confirmed by the evening's result.

## BACHELORS' WIVES.


“Let sinful bachelors their woes deplore,  
Full well they merit all they feel—and *more*.”

Who is there in this grumbling state of existence, that has not at some querulous moment pronounced servants to be the greatest plagues upon earth? and, amongst the minor *miseries*, the briars of this working-day world, is there one more to be dreaded than the necessity of filling the vacant space of a discharged *help*, by the admission of a new *hindrance*—a *stranger* to one's household and habits? The very first intimation of a fresh domestic unavoidably suggests to the active imagination the multifarious evils of Pandora's box—in a reversed position—Hope being always at the *top* instead of the bottom; and under that hope, what a mass of care is haply congregated!

A new servant may be likened in some respects to a new book, which, having for a certain period been in circulation, is transferred to our hands by the last possessor *when done with*; and what a volume of iniquity may we not have to wade through! What countless defects may there not be hidden under a neat and promising exterior! What latent mischief may there not lurk within its leaves! How many blots and incorrigible faults may lurk behind a fair title page. What false morality may tarnish every chapter of the work. How many original and acquired blemishes meet the eye!—dogs' ears and other deteriorations to disgust the fastidious taste during perusal! Or, should it haply come fresh and new into our hands, how many passages, even then, will there be found for correction and excision before we can safely trust it in one's family, or recommend it to the approval of others. Under the most favourable aspect, how brief may be the Table of Contents, how vast the List of Errata! And after all the attention and time bestowed upon the subject—

*"Le jeu n'en vaut pas la chandelle."*

Some remedies are confessedly worse than the disease to which we would apply them, and, for my own part, I would "*put up with*" any thing exclusive of the *honest, clean, and sober*, which constitute the *sine qua non* of good housewifery, rather than encounter a *New Broom*, which, as a matter of course, will



sweep clean away every system of the old one, especially in the culinary department, even to the repudiation of the last chosen furniture of the kitchen shelves and scullery appurtenances, which places are never, by any chance, provided with any article that said *new broom* can conveniently or effectively handle.

The ills we know are proverbially light in comparison with those we know not of, and as I am of an indolent spirit, I would, if possible submit, as I have just said, to those of old, rather than encounter a strange face under my roof—an apparition which never fails to appal my sight with a new Gorgon; nevertheless, I am free to own that in this submission of mine “to present ills” rather than to “horrible imaginings” there *are* drawbacks, and, it must be confessed, heavy ones, too.

One day, a cockney tradesman combating in his own way some objections on my side to an article of manifold use, a *multum in parvo*, which he had recommended to my notice, and which, from its very complexity I doubted being eligible to every purpose it professed to answer, the honest man bid me remember that “there never was no *good ill-conweeniency* without its *bad ill-conweeniency*,” a remark which struck me at the time to be as sound in its philosophy as in its orthography; and has served me on like occasions of argument, never failing to convince; I have found it applicable to many subjects—but to servants in particular,



and mostly so to those who have kept their places long enough to have become fixtures in my house.

*Old servants* (as they call themselves, at whatever age) like *old post-boys*, are certainly, to say the least, *fatiguing* to jog on with. I have been in the habit of *keeping* my servants for long-*ish* periods, and have bitter cause to know that to harbour a favourite domestic is to cherish little less than an unrelenting ruler over oneself and the *other* dependents of the house, for no sooner does such a person find him, or herself (as the case may be), worth retaining, than said *he*, or *she*, begins to rule over us with a rod of iron; we then find that what at first was obeyed as a duty is now conceded as a favour, and from the moment we have made such individuals necessary to our happiness, they begin to render us completely miserable.

How is this to be avoided? It is scarcely possible when a servant has resided any length of time under your roof, and of necessity been mixed up in the interests and events of your family, and *done nothing for which to be turned away*—and this, nine times out of ten is, I take it, the *summum bonum* of what is termed “a valuable servant.” It is, I say, *impossible* to avoid showing such a person favour and indulgence; but mark the consequence: if St. Paul’s stands on consecrated ground, you are thenceforward that person’s slave; your immunities as master of the house are no longer acknowledged, or their exercise permitted by these

beggars on horseback if once you suffer them to ride over their natural boundaries, for then farewell to rule and supremacy on your side ; you may indeed still be "*King*," but they *will* be "viceroys over you," and then your goods and chattels may, like Shylock's, as well be "confiscate unto the state of Venice"—for you have no longer a control over what you have intrusted to these "huge feeders," these consumers of your substance, than if you had formally made over to them, a free gift of your household stuff,—which in effect is "confiscate," (taken from you) and if you would not thenceforth live in a state of continual struggle and warfare, your plan is, uncomplaining submission and resignation.

It has been resolved into an axiom that *no man is more a slave in a house than the master*—and the truth of the assertion is clear when an *old servant* is paramount—once in that case, venture to assert your authority, and you are undone ; for then comes pouting, next downright insolence, and you are finally told that they "find they can no longer please, and, if they can't give satisfaction they had better *go*." In short, these "pampered menials" are troublesome enough when they depend on *you*, but, when they have once made you dependent upon *them*—"farewell the glories of a throne!" and welcome slavery in the most stringent sense of the word—for to this complexion must those come at last who keep "*Old Servants*."

At the very period of penning these remarks, which are written in letters of gall, I am smarting under the *bad* "ilconweeniency" of one of these iron despots, in the shape of a sturdy, bustling, opinionated, little body, who, during a period of twenty years, having gradually wedged herself within my walls, and by a similar process into my good opinion under divers circumstances of sickness and sorrow, in much of which she has necessarily borne a part, and with some credit — imperceptibly acquired confidence from indulgence, and power from trust—being withal a "*Scollard*," who has, she boasts, "*larn'd* to keep accompts," and like Lingo, that *Master* of Scholars is able to "*larn*" others—it followed that, as

"Molehills, by slow degrees, to mountains rise,"

this "learned Theban," ascended by patient steps from the low grade of under-housemaid in my family, to the high post of Housekeeper, which important and responsible office she fills with due—(I wish I could add—*becoming*) dignity; yet, notwithstanding Mrs. Fussy's boasted *Scollard-ship*, her book-keeping for some time puzzled me a good deal. Certes her "*a Counts*" still occasionally perplex me, for, like Lord Loggerhead, who spelt Physician with an *F* (F-i-z—Fiz) Mrs. F's orthography is rather loose, but this slight defect in her "larning," countenanced by so many of her betters,

has long ceased to inconvenience me, and I have learned to translate *Piggins* into *Pigeons*—*Bear* into *Beer*, and by a slight process, turning *Table-lining* inside out, convert it into *Table Linen*. But hold—having by a lucky accident possessed myself of a choice scriptory document, I can at once present my reader with a specimen of Mrs. Fussy's boasted erudition, and at the same time furnish a short sketch of my own life, character, and behaviour. This precious *morceau* was inadvertently dropped in my chamber by the writer, without superscription or seal; and I hope I shall stand excused for not having given back to its author such a unique specimen of literary ability, which I here present *literatim et verbatim*.\*

From the *Rookery*,  
Hempshire.

“DEAR ANT,—

“You who are in Lonnon (deer Lonnon!) *can* have no earthy grounds to go upon, and you shouldn't sting and nettle me about what you very improperly caul my *neglec*. If, like me, you only Leafed with Trees, and had no gape-seed but that of Rooks, you would have plenty of Caws to disturb you and make you look black at your cross-pondents!

“I suppose as I Leaf in the country, you think I

\* On consideration, I think it better to rectify the *spelling* of certain words, in order to render the purposed sense easy to the reader, which it might not otherwise be.

find a good deal of thyme—but it is ruefully the rewerse. You should re-Collect my master is a tiresome Badsheller, and gives me no peas night or day—being full of romantic affections, and therefour very litigious about being left alone by his sylph (self), when his old goat (gout) is flying about him, for fear it should get into his stomach some day.

“Last weak it seessed his grate toe, wile he was taking the Hare out in his carriage, which came in contrast with two Male Coaches, who scratched his two pannels in a trebble way; and the shook of the collusion browsed the vertical part of his back-bone in such a manner, that, it will be a nigh sore if it sticks to him. This occident also brought back Master’s old asmantics, which disorder considerably stops his breath, and hinders him from talking; it also prevents his lying downright; so that all that sort of thing revolves upon me, and obversely gives me no importunity for sweet converse; and as for taking up a Pin to dress man, woman, or child in a litter, it is out of the question.

“But—where was I?—Oh—*well then*, to perseed.

“We cauld in the mast emanent Doctar in these parts, who covered Master’s body all over with lineaments, and put him to Bed with some emolument in a draft. Nix day he proscribed nothing but hot water, which he thought would do him good, and in which he said the pure sufferer must be dewly liquidated from head to foot, from top to toe, before he could be heeled, or hope to have a leg to stand upon.

“ Yesterday he was Harpooned (for you must know that harpooning for all sorts of romantic affections is a perfect emporium) : the harpooning bath looks like a large, parrot’s cage, in which Master is insulated in a state of nubibus, and then covered with green Bays, and rubbed all over with friction by an old *yeast-dingy man*, who accidentally came from a Broad on Porpous. He is a natiff of *Chinee*, and Timbuck too, or some of them cold eastern coasts, where all the Negus comes from. He is a fine tall Atlantic figure of a man, but dark as a rebus, and ugly as *satin*. Master says he was a great man when a Broad in his own country, and the *Patriot of his Tripe*. Never the less he is offable enough when he comes into Master’s presents, when his obeisity is so low, that I am ready to bust my stays with laughing. He’s a very supposititious man, and wears an omelette round his neck all ways, which he says is *charming*. Master calls him docter *sans gradus*, on account of his Book larning, and his fondness for water, for he keeps all the men-sarvents constantly under the pump with large bouquets in their hands, in a dish on to what Master acquires for his private oblations (for you must know that Master is very abstemious on pints of water, and says that cleanliness is nix to goodliness) ; besides, he cannot beer water unless it is *pilfered*, and the pilfering-stone revolves untiringly upon my hands ;—indeed, I do nothing *but* pilfer, whenever I can steal from Master.

“ But my pin is getting a head, and I must come

to the pint, for I am in momentary expectation of another parioximie.

“ So *without sans ceremony*, as the French says, *a due !* for I must owe you the rest of this letter till I can finish it.

“ I once more take pin in hand, after my long paws.

“ For seven days after I wrote the four going lines, Master was so weekly that he could not set up for an hour—indeed, little more than five minutes to gather.

“ He is, however, out of bed at length, and re-Covered—edibly improved by a little annual food, and, without exception, fatter ; but he cries out sadly becaus his usual whine is not aloud, for his docktor re-commends sodar water which is to be swallowed in a state of efflorescence. Docktor says that master is so full of general information that he is quite unlike other people, and that if he does not get well all at once he must suck *Coomb*, which I hopes will be of sarvice to his couff, for it gives him no slip night or day. But never the less he has begun to a mews his sylph by tickling his old catarrh which he brought over from a Broad, in his young ears, he also dips now and then into the pepper at his breakfast and his books, for you must know that master is devoteed and begotted to littery peashoots and all such superfluities which keeps his rheum in constant disorder, which is one of my complaints. Ah ! when will the

sweet thyme come when *I* can sit porous over a *Book* at the top of the house (for you know how fond I am of reeding) and not have it rung out of my hand by a Bell wether I lick it or not : but such superficial enjoynments is denied to poor sarvents.

“ For my part, i’m almost tired of being nuss to a pure old man who is growing wuss and wuss every day, which, considering the ears *he* has seen, is not a Stonishing ; but when his old goat once gets hold of him, and his boil is uppermost, his temperature is very hot, and then he lunches out into dreadful excrescencies, and uses the most unseen langerige, even before femails, to his old wallet, Mr. Pryer, and is so imposthumatious that he flings every missal that he can lay hands upon at the pure man, who is obliged to be as watchful as a Lennox, in order to delude his master’s vigilance. He ought to have had a whiff to a tend to his old ears, but Mr. Pryer tells us that master was jolted in his youth by a young Gull, and so took an antiquity to the old femail sects ; and becaws he has no natural hair, he is so haspirated against the whole feminine fraternity, that he almost eats every woman except me that is an eye to him ; *this I nose* ; I would not bare him, as I does, in all weathers, and trot after him, from morning till night, if I did not expec to have my good thumping Leg easy, when he dyes, which I thinks can’t be long fust, to judge by the faded taint of his skin, which is as pale as ashes ; so the pure old crater *must* be soon burnt out, as Mr. Pryer



says!—and when I seize him Fume and fret over his pepper about the nation's policies, and reflect how few ears he has left over his head, I says to my sylph when I looks at him, says I, ah! if I had as many sufferings in my waistcoat pocket as *you* has, I wouldn't mind how many tacks Sir Robber Peel put upon it! But master cannot bear any outlay from his income for the Queen's Minsters, not with Standing he portends that he is so *royal* a subjec. *May, nong port* for that, as the French says.

“But, as I said before, master's goat is rabidly re-Tiring, and master all ready, goes a bout the house, hobnobbing with his clutch-stick; and we are all in high hops of a trip to Lonnon, and that when the winter champagne, as master terminates it, is out, we shall get into spirits again, and then I truss it will be—*Hay for Post Horses! and dear Lonnon!*

“At the wust, when marster's leash is out (and he has but *three* ears to come) we shall never see this dissolute spot of earth again, for such retirement is only fit for sour Asiatics and old worn out Hermitages who live upon cockles and scraps, counting their beds all day, with nothing to slip upon at night. I a sure you that when I thinks of deer Lonnon and it's de Lights (tho' master says it is full of nothing but Cupids and Turpentine) I feels very dissolute!

“Buy the buy, the kitchen maid you sent us from Burkely Skewer, is a sad ignoranimous, and, the cook a sures me, scarcely knows how to draw the

intellects out of a chicken, and make it fit for Roosting on the Spit! She is a very bold Gull all so, and tho' I don't portend, by any means, to set my sylph up for a *virtuoso*, yet I can't lick Gulls who runs after every man they meets.

" 'But ark!' as Mockheath says in the tragedy, 'I ear the tole of the bell!' which, as Mockbeth says, in the same opera, 'frightens the oil from its proprietor!' Oh! when I can dispense without sarvice, and turn my back upon the kitchen, it will be a new area in my existence! I may then, perhaps, have a *Husband* to wait upon. Well, well; I must be patient, and hope for the beast!

" And now, my dear Ant, I hope you will no longer be gravelled at my long silence, and that if you are above ground when this reaches you, you will send me a grain or two of noose from your store; in the mint thyme, except all my *best loaf* for your sylph, and give the rest, dear Ant, to acquiring friends, from

Your faithfool Knees,

HANNAH FUSSY.

" P.S. Proscription.—I shall close up this long pistol with master's cress—a *lion romping*—for I am sure you must be quite sick of the site of my thimble."

After having given the reader this genuine "diffusion," as Mrs. Fussy would call it, of my house-keeper's "Pin," I return to my subject, by saying, that to all these peculiarities of diction I have no

objection, being of opinion that the *March of Mind* need not propel such folks out of their natural walk of life, which, once o'erstepped, is very apt to lead them beyond the straight line of their duty, never again to return to it.

Servants, when uneducated, are often stupid—always cunning; lax enough in their duties, and sufficiently idle and roguish for their station: but *educated*, they are all these, with a quickened sense of their own importance, and a knowledge they did not before possess, of how to use their advantages, and more dexterously carry on their peculations. Commend me to an attendant who will perchance present my letters with their directions upside down, and knows better how to handle a knife and fork than a pen. I hate “schollards” in *my* kitchen. But to return.

To the aforesaid *eccentricities* in Mrs. Fussy's general style, I repeat, I do not object, and such difficulties once surmounted, I find the “House-keeper's *Weakly* Book,” as she *libels* it, kept correctly enough—that is, I never *find fault* with it;—but this makes her exceedingly vain and arrogant. Most people are apt to be proud, and justly so, of praise; but in the case of servants, their lofty claims to consideration are reared upon the *absence of complaint*.

It was, I think, Clarissa Harlowe's uncle who said—“I make a point of finding fault very often with my servants, in order not to have any fault to

find ;"—and he was right. Abstain from correction, cease but to *find fault*, and they are satisfied that they are *faultless* ; and when once this conviction enters their blockheads, it leaves no room for brains, and the effect soon reveals itself in some formidable shape or other. Now if my little tyrant think proper sometimes to behave personally obedient and respectful to me, what is her deportment in the servants' hall, where she is generally *detrop* ?

The high post of housekeeper places her at the head of the servants, who, from her domineering habits, regard her, one and all, as their common and natural foe, and she is hated in proportion as she asserts the *superior*, the *upper servant*,—raised, as they believe, by her *de-merits* to that " bad eminence !"

Of this she is perfectly aware, and she is often obligated " to *indicate* her own character from their *dispirsions*," as she says ; though, in reality, their hatred touches her not a jot ; for, like *Maw-worm*, she " likes to be *rewild*, and loves to be *parsecooted*," persuaded, as she declares, " that they have an *antiphony* to her, only because she does every *India-visual* thing for my good : of which *good* I am sometimes more than dubious ; for, owing to her over-zeal, I often part with very tolerable servants, for no " exquisite reason," but because they cannot, as they say, " *put up with Mrs. Fussy's hairs and greases* ;" while she, in her turn,

insists that I must not listen to their *versification* of the matter, which is invented for the purpose of casting an *amputation* on her *conduct*; assuring me that she is, *in fac*, obliged to submit to the *insolation* of the *imperate men-servants* and the *hypercritical Gulls*. And on a recent occasion she appealed to my candour to *denounce* whether it was not very *h-asperating* to be told by the footman that she was like *Master*? Which she did not scruple to avow was “destroying her character, and taking away her *indent* at once!” Certain it is, I have lost many a useful servant, because Mrs. Fussy “was more Master than Master himself.” Still is Mrs. F. undoubtedly a very trustworthy adherent in a general way; not altogether unmindful of her own interests (in all legality); but then, in order to make up for any partial deviation from an unmixed devotion to mine, she is tenderly scrupulous that no other *paragon* in the house, or elsewhere, shall have more claim on me than “his bond.” The worst of all this is that I have, somehow or other, conceived a sort of regard for this troublesome little animal, and value her far beyond the extent of her deservings.

Custom is arbitrary, and is too apt at all times to exact something more than reason approves. I have of late, taken it into my foolish old head that I cannot now do without this teasing little appendage, of which *craze* she is pretty well aware, and makes me remember what she justly calls, my *obligations* to her during the fits of gout in my feet

by throwing them in my teeth the moment I have a leg to stand upon and able to sustain new inflictions—making me sigh to reflect upon the morbid state of bodily and mental dependence to which habit and infirmity have reduced me with this petty tyrant, while a retrospective pang of remorse at such moments pains my heart even to aching,—that an early jealousy of control and tenacity of the “liberty which belongs to a bachelor’s estate,” should have generated so inveterate a dread of petticoat-government, by which, in my struggle to escape the whirlpool Scylla of matrimony, I wrecked myself upon the barren and cheerless rock of the old bachelor’s Charybdis, a *Housekeeper*.

Junius derives the word *bachelor* from the Greek of *foolish* ! Alas ! why did I not marry ?—I should have known that in domestic, as well as statistical polity, a lawful ruler, however despotic in government, is always to be preferred to a vulgar usurper—and

“ Bitter penance with an iron-whip ”

pursues me unceasingly for past folly, and too late, suggests that I should have derived more honour, as well as happiness from an educated and companionable shrew, than can be found in the domestic enthrallment of an illiterate and mercenary scold. Of all wives, the most galling and intolerable is a *Bachelor’s wife* ! But these and similar reflections come too late to a man of decayed constitution and

immoveable habits, leaning with a gouty-crutch upon the edge of his grand climacterick, isolated, sad and old—and, as I have never loved gold for its *own* sake, denied even the miser's thrift for comfort,—

“ A solitary fly  
Without a horde of sweets !”

Setting these melancholy considerations of old bachelorism aside, and turning to the financial part of the case, which too often renders the idea of a legal partner so formidable to a man of moderate fortune, I am by no means certain that Mrs. Fussy's want of judgment does not injure my purse and reputation much more than a reckless spendthrift and slanderer would do ; she is so bent upon what she calls *saving* (a very ominous and questionable word with womenkind at all times) my money for me (or perhaps for herself) that like simple Indians who will exchange their precious ore for tinsel, she barter's my good name for positive trash, and tries to make me believe that I am in pocket by the bargain ; for instance—I was once a great amateur of China—well—a *Sevre* plate is one day carelessly “ *dishmolished*,” as Mrs. Fussy would say, during the progress of what women call *putting things to rights* (in other words putting every thing out of one's way)—the fractured treasure is taken by Mrs. Fussy to some cunning healer of such divisions, and in due time she exultingly displays to my admiring gaze the united particles, the undiscoverable joins,

which she assures me would not be visible even through my *horoscope*—at the same moment challenging my judgment as to the amount paid for such a wondrous re-union—premising with sparkling eyes and glowing cheeks, that had *I legislated* the matter instead of *her*, the charge would have been a *minion* of times more, but *she* had *reformed* the mender to be very *immoderate* in his demand, “as the poor housemaid had the *misfortin* to drop the *sarcer*, and Master had flown into fractions, and made a *haberdashery* about it, and insisted upon the repair being paid for out of the poor *gull's* own pocket!” By which considerate deviation from truth I reckon a possible “*saving*” of a little silver, while I positively lose a golden portion of good repute amongst my poorer neighbours, who must naturally be led to cite this, and similar instances, in proof that I am a hard and grinding exactor from the earnings of “*poor sarvents*,” whom I am thus supposed, as Mrs. Fussy would “*terminate*” it, to *milk* of their gains.

Two more instances may be cited, wherein my reputation for liberality is placed at discount by this careful comptroller of my affairs.

Entering a fresh parish, before I was well settled, two gentlemen-collectors—as it is sometimes usual—called to enforce the “*Easter offering* ;” and as I happened to ascend the drawing-room stairs just as Mrs. Fussy was called upon by the footman to answer the knotty question of *to pay* or *not to pay*,



I overheard her positively refuse to give the *Vicar* his due, on the plea that "*Master never went to Church at all;*" she omitted to add that I was generally room-bound, and therefore unable to attend public worship, and as the applicants left the door before I could hobble down again to stop them, I was compelled to write a tedious explanation, accompanying it with *double* the customary tribute, as an *amende honorable* for the rebuff they had met with.

Another time, one of those oral beggars, who knock at every door in their course, was turned away by Mrs. Fussy with the information, that "*Master never encouraged mendacity, for that he looked upon Beggars as mere impostumes, and moreover made it a rule never to give anything to the indignant poor!*" Which assertion being made in the hearing of some female charity-mongers, well-meaning ladies, who happened to stop at the door at the same moment, with a "mendacious" view to abstract something from my pocket for "indignant" poverty, they thought proper to read me a tedious homily upon the virtue of Christian charity, which, in five minutes after, they grossly violated, by their severe strictures upon the conduct of some of their neighbours, who, under the joint plea of limited means and an unlimited family, declined their subscription to the object in question.

But I should tire my reader with the countless instances of Mrs. Fussy's determination to *save* my

purse, when any hand but *her own*, *manifests*, as she would say, a desire to dip into it. Such, however, is the bondage of habit, and my unconquerable dread of "the new broom," that I very seldom venture to express my disapprobation of these things; for when I *do*, my craven nature soon quails under the "woman's full and eternal privilege of tongue," and I am *hors de combat*, of which position Mrs. Fussy needs no knowledge of a foreign language to make her perfectly aware. In short, I dare not *do battle* with so able a tactician and so formidable an antagonist. Indeed, as I have said, the slightest manifestation on my part of opposition to her mighty will, is at once received as a declaration of war, the belligerent powers are ready for action, and before I can wield a lawful weapon with which to defend myself, the little savage whips out her verbal tomahawk, and scalps me in the twinkling of an eye.

Then, "tears that live in an onion" are drawn forth to water her pretended sorrow, blended with clamorous sobs and sighs—and I am compelled to hear for the hundredth time that "*sarvice* is no *heritage*," that she's "tired of her *exigence*—is a *parfec slave*—would rather *heat* a crust in *peas*—strives every *narve* to please—*carn't* give *sertisfrac-tion* no how!—poor *sarvents*!—had better go," &c. &c., and winds up these ready-made technicalities, by "hypercritically" presenting her seals of office (the keys) affecting to retire;—at which awful crisis

my dastardly imagination conjures up in her place, the attendance of an impracticable maukin, with two left hands, a novice in flannel-folding—a harsh, horny-palmed chafer of chalk-stone knucklers ; or else, a dram-drinking daudle, who sleeps when she should be awake, and is wakeful only to prevent my sleeping—in short, a *stranger*—to me a *hydra*, in the contemplation of which, my heart faints, and I no longer *faire le vaillant*—down go my colours and I beat a hasty retreat ; in other words, I adopt a soothing deprecating accent to avert the cunning gypsy's pretended threat of leaving me—declare that all I said was but jest—beg her to compose herself, and finally dry up the tears *she never shed* with a bank note, and taking an admonitory hint from a shooting pain in my left toe, call her my excellent nurse,—the paragon of good creatures ; in fine, humble myself that she may be exalted ; while she, poor lamb ! with well dissembled meekness, declares she “ should be very sorry to have *words*,” (she'd be more sorry to be *without* them !) “ *Per-tests* she is heart and soul attached to my *good* ” (*things* !) — “ thinks of nothing but my interest,” (and her *own* !) — “ doesn't want to *go*,” (would *die* rather !) “ will stay if I *wishes* it,” (whether I wish it or no.) “ *My* happiness is all *she* cares for, &c. &c.,” and curtesying with the greatest humility, she demurely leaves *the Presence*—and as the door closes upon this little pest, I sigh to think that she is so “ old ” and necessarily so “ *attached* ” a *servant* !

*Au bout du compt*, it must be acknowledged, that if servants be "evils," they are *necessary* ones. It is true, we suffer much with them, but it is equally true that we should suffer infinitely more *without* them. And we must compound for some defects in these our humble and less-gifted fellow creatures, in consideration of the use they are to us, and their stinted advantages. It was reasonably suggested to an impatient master, in extenuation of a faulty domestic, that "he could not expect to purchase every virtue under heaven for twenty pounds a year." Yet how few of us are so considerate!—so far from it, there are many people, liberally endued with charitable allowance for the failings and infirmities of those in their own superior sphere of life, who are often least indulgent to that uncultivated class in which they seem surprised as well as indignant to discover the common errors of our common nature, and with whom it is sometimes a crime of the blackest dye when a simple, ignorant, serving maid is found to be less than perfection.

For my own part, notwithstanding my occasional railing, and discontents at these our poor relations in the social scale, I have in my inmost heart treasured many of such humble friends, and grievously mourned them when adverse circumstance, or death, has removed them from my sight; and, spite of human frailty, I am bound to admit the great and valuable contributions of such people, not only to our comforts but to our necessities,

which emphatically suggest to me, after a fit of ill humour expended in all sorts of vituperative reflections upon the whole vexatious race, that these our erratic fellow-travellers, in our enforced march through life, albeit their frequent stumbles, and the trouble they give us to keep them upward in the right path, spite of their faults and foibles, their failings and our revilings, form an essential and indispensable part and parcel of our home comforts, and it is but a just conclusion—borrowed from the poet's playful admission of the *beau sexe*—in respect to servants, that we have but to feel the want to acknowledge the need of them, and that

“Howsoe'er we scorn and flout 'em,  
We may live *with*, but cannot live *without* 'em.”

## MARKED MEN.

THE great Lord Bacon has recorded his conviction that, individuals bearing upon their persons some natural, or otherwise *indelible mark* are, for the most part, *fortunate* in their lives. But, it is unnecessary to remind the intelligent reader (and all *our* readers *are* intelligent !) that Bacon wrote—*flourished*—between two or three hundred years ago, and, without intending any scandal against Queen Elizabeth, whose chancellor, by the way, he became, —*we* (to adopt the plural unit) *we* mean to maintain, that opinions, which might have had force as well as foundation in *her* day, may be—and *are* at “this present writing,” as much out of date as her Maiden-Majesty’s ruff; and we are quite sure that had Bacon lived to be *older* he would have been cured of his skin-deep impression.

We are indisputably wiser than he was by several centuries, and, repudiating his old saw, as having lost its edge by long usage, we are prepared to confute and supersede all such time-serving theories, showing, if not their utter fallacy, at the least, very startling exceptions to the rule laid down by that man of mark and statesman-philosopher, who, whatever data he might have had to go upon, has left no abiding proofs (as *we* mean to do) whereon to support his bald dictum, which would, in our day, have raised the *spotted-boy* to the highest pinnacle of earthly glory, instead of his little dotted body being confined, as it was, to *one spot* in a show-man's van. But to our text.

Has it never struck the inquisitive observer, while casting his morning eye over the first page of the Daily Press, that, under the heads of *Absconded*—*Run-away*—and *Missing* the absentee is almost always described as noticeable for some *indelible*, personal particularity, native or acquired? Some distinguishing *trait*, some obvious freak of nature, some complexional stain, some mal-conformation, some striking peculiarity or unseemly blur, and in some cases, as if dame Nature had purposely stamped their possessors for erratic pursuits. Or should these born characteristics in any instance fail to be conspicuous, the object in question is sure to bear about him, in lieu of such, some casual but equally indelible blemish, some oddity of dress or manner which points out the fugitive, and renders his iden-

tity easy to his pursuers. And these, forsooth, are the men whom Bacon has declared *fortunate* !

The frequency of our remarks upon this interesting subject led us ultimately into somewhat of a contemplative, philosophical, and *philanthropical* cast of thought—superinduced by being ourself a *marked man*—and urged us to enquire the more curiously into the original and prompting cause of such moral defection in such people—which struck us to have something in it not hitherto dreamed of in our philosophy ; and, as we have no unreasonable desire (or expectation) to have our positions blindly adopted, or our assertions taken upon trust ;—as we possess no swinish obstinacy of character, in short, have nothing like *Bacon* in our composition (although we wish we had a little of his Attic salt to preserve our writings from their fated oblivion), we proceed to place before our reader the origin and ground of our present speculation and ultimate conclusion.

For some time after our first observations, having, perhaps, as we have hinted, a *peculiar interest* in such insertions, we occupied ourself in collecting *cases* from our daily paper under the aforesaid heads ; and subsequently, in comparing, and drawing inferences from their agreeing tendency, our speculations, vague and unsubstantial in the beginning, have at length found a solid and abiding ground whereon to build a theory which will not only supersede Bacon's rusty *Saw*, but show that



marked men are remarkable for an erratic and truant disposition; wherefore, we contend, they should be statistically rated, exempt from personal responsibility, and not amenable to common-law, moral or politic — born, as they doubtless would be found, had *Varley* consulted their nativity, under an erratic planet, and guided by a fatality which “sweeps their way, and marshals them to”—*vagrancy*. In fact, regulates their irregular walk through life.\*

But let us proceed to the promised proofs, and place before our now impatient reader some stray specimens of the cases aforesaid, which we take up severally, without selection or regularity as to dates, presenting them, however, in their authentic form, as extracted from the columns of the “*Times*” and other newspapers.

In September, 1842—

“*Absconded*, with sums of money, James Herry” (query, *Hurry*?). This person is described as having “a delicate complexion, prominent forehead, hair

\* That excellent artist and eccentric man, the late Mr. John Varley, one day in conversation with the writer, incidentally referred to the *last time* he was *tossed by a bull*! and afterwards observed carelessly, in reply to the surprise excited by the apparent recurrence of an accident which seldom befalls people in general not more than *once* in their lives, if at all—“Oh! I was born under a particular aspect,” (that of *Taurus*, perhaps) “which decreed that I should be often tossed by a bull! It’s my *fate*!”

long, and a large mole on the right side of his forehead."

*In the May previously—*

Thomas Evans *also* absconded with moneys, &c. belonging to his employer.

He is described as " stoutly made, bow-legged, with a large oval countenance, and watery eyes !"

In same year, and in the appropriate month of *March*, another youth walks off " with moneys not his own, &c." He is distinguished by a " large mouth," and for an addiction to the wear of " green spectacles in a *steel* (query, *steal* ?) frame." " Had on" (when he went off) " a *blue* upper coat, and underneath, another of *rifle* (!) *green*."

In October, 1842, we find the case of *Jacob Dompling*, who has committed forgery.

He is by birth a Dutchman, " square built" (*i. e.* *Dutch-built*), " light eyes and complexion, with a scar on the right cheek, walks upright, with his hands folded behind him" !

In January, 1843, James Johnson also comes under the head of *absconded*.

" He is inclined to be stout, with a full face, sal-low complexion, full eyes, large mouth and teeth. *The two upper front ones fold over a little, and are dirty*" (!)\*

\* N B. A slight coincidence with a difference is to be observed in the last two cases ; namely, Dompling's *hands* are folded behind, and Johnston's *teeth* in front.

The last case under the head of *Absconded* that we shall quote is that of Charles Bourjot, who is described as “spare in figure—fair complexion—long visage—dark hair, bald at the crown—and a *mole on the face, under the eye*, with a prominent and upright gait.”

Turn we now to those persons described under the more delicately-cautious denomination of—

“*Missing*,”

and it will be found that, by the same fatality, notoriety has *marked* them for *her own*.

The first is—

“*A Gentleman.*”\*

This interesting individual is said to exhibit “a saturnine complexion, and a melancholy expression. *A mouth peculiarly shaped, and drawn down at the angles.* Nose short, and slightly turning up. Brown hair, thick and straight, worn much over the forehead, which is full. *Has a long red scar, frequently visible above his short-collar, on the left side of his neck :* speaks with a hollow voice, and is troubled with a quick consumptive cough.”

The next *missing*, is a youth, with light hair and complexion, and a *dark mole on the right side of his cheek*. †

\* Vide *Times*, June, 1842.

† March, 1842.

George S——r (also *missing*) is noticeable for fair hair and complexion, and *a scar down his forehead.*\*

Another “*gentleman*” is missing, who, disdaining false hair, wears a *black silk scull-cap*, his head having recently been shaved, with only his *linen* marked—and *that* with three consecutive C. C. C—’s! †

Our next paragraph tells us that Mr. Philip P— has *left his home*, fancifully arrayed in a plum-coloured frock-coat, red-plaid silk waistcoat, and baracon trowsers—(what a dress for an English *January*!) “is rather short, and has *blue eyes, very much sunk.*” ‡

*John Pettingal* leaves *his* home also, very unlike a gentleman,—and is to be observed “in a stooping position when he walks, and a *contraction of the right arm.* He is capriciously attired “in a dark jacket, *with fustian sleeves and back, corded-worsted unwhisperables, olive smock frock, glazed cap, leathern gaiters, and high shoes.*” || And *Thomas Eliot* follows his bad example, by deserting *his* wife and family, displaying, however, a much superior taste in dress, being attired in a “*claret-coloured French coat, with velvet collar—a double-breasted waistcoat, with coloured flowers, and white under-*

\* Nov. 1841, vide *Sunday Times*.

† Sept. 1842.

‡ 1843, vide *Times*.

|| March, 1843, vide *Times*.

waistcoat. *Blue and black* trousers — black kerchief, and cloth boots. He is thin, and *pale of face*" (he is a *tailor*), "has a serious look, a slight stoop in his walk—rather short, and is a native of Long Town, in Cumberland. He speaks with a broad northern accent. Has high cheek-bones, with a *scar across his nose !*"

*Five pounds* are offered for the above person (his clothes must be worth the money) by *George Buzzard*, Clerk of the Parochial Office, Poland Street.

"*Thomas Brocklebank*" (another runaway husband), is "*six feet high ; eyes rather light grey ; hair dark brown, with sandy coloured whiskers ; nose short ; teeth full ; a deep dimple in his chin, and a cut on his upper lip ; knees bent forward ; voice rough.\**

On February 1st, of this year, a young man was missing, "of fair complexion, with a *small mole* on the *upper part of each cheek !*" And

*In the January* previous, fifty pounds are offered for a knot of runaway convicts from custody ; the hand-bill thus describes these *remarkably* unfortunate men's most striking peculiarities.

*Thomas Green.* "Oval visage, &c., with a *scar on his right eye-brow.*"

*William Thompson.* "Oval visage, and a *small scar* on his nose."

\* December, 1843.

Joseph Smith. "Oval visage, &c., and a round ring mark on his left arm."

Joseph Bowers. "Oval visage, pitted with the small pox, and several scars on his left hand."

Will any one, after this, pretend to doubt the unlucky fatality of these persons? Let those "jest at scars who never felt a wound;" but *we* know them to be "parlous things!"

When these convicts escaped, they had on the prison dress, viz. — a *yellow and black checked jacket and trousers*, and were *without hats or caps!*

What a complication of *misfortune* is exhibited in these runaways! Why, their very extraordinary habiliments might have secured their re-capture, without any other peculiarities.

But here we stop; although we *could* adduce many more instances of missing men—people who, for the most part, judging by their description, one might suppose never *could* be missed by *anybody*; but we abstain, for, were we to bestow *all* our tediousness, our *readers* might be *missing men* also.

From the varied, yet harmonious, specimens given, it would appear that a determinate love of vagrancy is confederate and auxiliary with marked ugliness; and that *moles, scars*, and other eccentric and "*indelible*" blots are but the brand of Cain diversified! *Not so*; but they assuredly, in *some* of our fellow mortals, bespeak — applying to them the *plain facts* quoted—an inherent and irrepressible

tendency to these predominate tastes—namely, to  
*abscond — wander — desert*; the constituent of a  
 deformed figure being, as it appears, *mobility*, or  
 “native power to move,” and that marks, natural  
 or acquired, premonstrate a talent for locomotion—  
 creating a stirring sympathy with universal liberty  
 —which, while it makes free with other men’s  
 money, has no abstract love for that article, that is,  
 interest in it *per se*; such irregular appropriation  
 being a *consequent effect* of a desire to exercise their  
 limbs, engendering a necessity for the means thereto.\*  
*Mais, à reculer pour mieux sauter, et revenons à*  
*nos moutons*,—our *lost sheep*, our marked and *miss-*  
*ing men*, those practical refuters of Lord Bacon’s  
 theory—rasher than fire but more easily put out—  
 his “fortunate” men, whose “griefs,” in fact,  
 “speak louder than advertisement.”

The unfortunate Thomas Evans aforesaid, had  
 “*bow legs and watery eyes*.” What was the conse-  
 quence? He *absconded*—and (of necessity) with  
 his master’s notes, which, in fact, made

“the wings he flew withal.”

He ought not to have been trusted *alone*. With  
 such legs and eyes a man is naturally led into

\* It is, we believe, (or *was*) customary for the surgeon of a  
 regiment to examine every recruit before his admission into our  
 army, and being considered “food for powder,” to ascertain  
 that his person is unblemished. May not this precaution have  
 arisen from the experience that men distinguished by any *mark*  
 are found prone to *desert*?

crooked ways and blind alleys, and we put it to any dispassionate and philosophic mind, whether, with limbs so curved, a man's walk through life can be straight, or with eyes habitually full to overflowing, see his own, much less his master's interest.

Herry *also* absconded, and tried to hide himself with his mole — vainly, of course—from notice. Moles are portentous things in open day; for who on earth can be ignorant that things of that kind are instinctively, addicted, to dark ways and underhand pursuits!

The next *unfortunate* upon our list of runaways is a youth of tender years, who blind to the possession of an *extra-sized mouth*, is led by his stars to wear *two* coats of conflicting colours, and to saddle his young nose for his journey with a pair of *green spectacles, set in steel*!

Here, *en passant*, we may observe, that as “some men there are who cannot abide a gaping pig,” so there are others who cherish a most illiberal and unaccountable prejudice against the habitual wearer of spectacles. We once heard *Appleby*, the little *great* man-messenger, on a time, to Richard Brinsley Sheridan and Drury Lane Theatre, tell a spectacled person, who had given him offence, that “*He never yet knew a man who wore spectacles, who wasn't a scoundrel!*” And besides this high authority, there are others who pretend, forsooth, that such adoptions give a sinister turn to the fea-



tures ; while there are other fanciful people, who gravely assert that a man with a strong cast in his eye—if it amount to a *squint*—cannot be as straightforward in his views as others. By many it is also believed that such a person's *hearing* is defective ; and we ourself knew a very popular singing-master, who would not undertake the instruction of a person remarkable for any visual obliquity, deeming such incapable of singing always *in tune*. We, however, do not see that because an *eye* is imperfect, that the *pupil* must necessarily be so too. *Mais n'importe passons à d'autres choses.*

*Johnson's* is a strong case in favour of our theory of non-resistance to our marked destiny.

This person, it may be recollected, had *large teeth, folding over in front*, and moreover "*dirty*" (!) Is it for one moment to be believed that the trivial cost of a tooth-brush, to a man laden with gold, would have deterred him from divesting his ivory from this casual stain ! No, believe it, his *fate demanded* that his teeth, prominently large and obtrusive, should be *dark* also. Then, again, is it to be supposed that a man like *Dompling*, with *his* peculiarities, could escape detection and apprehension ? *Impossible.*

Look at Mr. P——d's dress, in which he "left home." Why, his plum-coloured coat, and red plaid silk waistcoat, must have been as glaring and unnatural on a January day as a July sun ; and must have acted as *placards* upon his person, point-

ing out its peculiarities, and at once proclaimed his whereabouts.

Not to draw our thread too fine by undue tension, we may now leave these *unfortunates* as we contend they are to their marked destiny, and simply add, that it seems as if a positive portion of our fellow-mortals were framed (either by nature or fortuitous circumstance) *to be missing*. Certain children put upon their legs *to go alone* as soon as they can stand, and wander from home to be *cried for*, not only within but without doors by the parties concerned. It is a very extraordinary fact, and one we have had frequent occasion to notice, that all *lost* children are distinguished for being blear-eyed or bandy-legged, or requiring extraneous support apart from that of their fond parents, by *joint irons* upon their tender limbs, or their eyes demanding protection from the "garish day" by means of a green shade (haply a cushion over the forehead); while the dress of such infants is, for the most part, by a singular choice, composed of bright green or scarlet robes, and their extremities cased in "*black worsted stockings, and lemon-coloured shoes*."\*

It would indeed appear, that a sort of pursuant destiny *marks* the runaway and fugitive from justice: it is certain that *marked* (*i. e. missing men*) when bearing visibly no other singularity, invariably ex-

\* Vide Mathews *At Home*.

hibit an eccentric and peculiar cut, or colour of dress, as if purposely to attract that notice to their habits, which, for their own purposes and interests, they should carefully eschew.

Observe the *Chevalier d'Industrie* whose vital aim it should be not to differ in externals from the man whose respectability he affects. Is he not *always* a noticeable, a *remarkable* person from the highest to the lowest of his craft, from the gambler to the pickpocket? and if nature has omitted to stamp him with any of the peculiarities aforesaid, will he not (by his destiny) point *himself* out, by singular adoptments? Is not his coat of a hue differing from the prevailing colour, or elaborately braided and be-tasselled, while every gentleman wears his quite plain? Are not his mouchstachios and whiskers fuller or varying in cut from the general mode? The brim of his hat larger or smaller than the existing fashion? and if black hats are in vogue, will he not glory in a white one (possibly with a black crape-band—?) are not his chains and seals ponderous, and prominently conspicuous, his shirt-pins, rings and broaches, gaudy and glaring to every eye?

Yes, dear reader, believe this—there is a moral harmony in all such deviations from common rule, an uncontrollable *destiny* which determines certain men (*un-fortunate* individuals) who are said to live by their wits, and who, from a perversity of choice, a moral obliquity of vision, are individually arrayed

in a manner that separates them from the more honourable and upright character.

“The stars are said to govern men—”

the *Higher Orders* doubtless. But for the less elevated and duller specimens of humanity, whose truant dispositions and erratic prepossessions tempt them to diverge from the prescribed path of duty and wander away from their abiding interests, other influences are employed ; and, certainly, as far as a review of a larger portion of the *marked* evidences adduced may determine, we may fairly and reasonably conclude that—

“ When *such* mortals go *astray*  
Their *scars* are more in fault than they.”

**UN RÉDUIT CHAMPÉTRE ;**  
**OR, THE MISERIES OF A CAKEHOUSE.**

An elegant sufficiency, content, retirement, rural quiet,  
friendship, books, progressive virtues, and approving  
Heaven!

A dream, that ne'er can equalled be,  
By all that waking eyes can see.

To A Cockney who has only tasted, by snatches, of  
rusticity, in a Sunday ramble

“ to where the silver Thames first rural grows ;”

or, like unto the immortal Johnny Gilpin, taken a  
jaunt to Edmonton and back, on the same day ; or,  
at most, inhaled an autumnal breathing of sea-air—  
just enough to clear off the smoke and fog, imbibed  
during three-fourths of the year in his native city.  
To such a man the name alone, of *country*, realizes

the *beau ideal* of all that he has dreamed to be blessed, pure, and good ; and if fiction be a part of poetry, he is a *poet*, for “ active hours of innocence and love ” at once fill the bright *speculum* of his mind ; the very word country, as if traced by an enchanter’s wand, conjures up before his mental vision the four seasons of the year—not indeed as Nature and Thomson produces them, singly and successive—advancing by slow and measured change, but together and full-grown, each “ an Adam at its birth,” they stand before his enwrapped fancy, arrayed in all their vast variety of loveliness ; their several and combined influences are at once upon and around him—the latent and reposing treasures of the earth, to others made precious by their coy delays, are, to his fantastic, glowing, imagination, at once revealed in beautiful maturity for his eager enjoyment.

First in the group stands “ Primogenial Spring,” unbosoming every grace ; the drooping snowdrop, with daffodils, that come before the swallow dares, the nodding violets and pale primroses that die unmarried ; hyacinths of purest virgin-white, low bent and blushing inwards, spring under his feet at a thought “ to make him garlands of.” Infinite numbers, delicacies, smells, with hues expression cannot paint, the stores of Nature, with her endless bloom, open above his head, shedding their fragrant freshness “ to strew him o’er and o’er.” Anon, an hundred fruits are pendant in the air, fanned by fervid

Summer's ripening breath, which wafts its balmy influence o'er the visionary's heated temples, while flowers "in all their liveries deck'd of summer pride," throw up their florid essence to his enraptured sense. He gathers the rose in bloom ; he inhales its delicious perfume. O'er the distant mead wide flies the tedded grain, and the new-made hay adds sweets unto the sweet, while Autumn, "crowned with the sickle," is ripe, and in golden fruition showers, with lavish wealth, its glorious treasures in his lap : its ardent rays have tinged the "wavy corn" with their own warm, yet receding, dyes ; e'en now the graceful sheaves are gathered up, and the gorgeous grandeur of the woods shows itself, tempered with a green and yellow melancholy ; while pensive Winter,

"Sullen and sad, with all his rising train of  
Vapours, clouds, and, storms——"

stands gravely warning the enthusiast that 'tis time to "summer it upon his hearth," there to ponder over Nature's love with grateful heart, and garner up his hopes of future joys in that bright land where seasons know no change—in Heaven ! which is the treasury of **ENDLESS BLISS**.

"So, by a calenture misled,  
The mariner, with rapture sees,  
On the smooth ocean's azure bed,  
Enamel'd meads and verdant trees."

Where now is fled the bright calenture of my mind!—the early visions of an excursive fancy which framed a paradise too bright for anything but dreams to dwell in—Where?

Echo answers—“*Where?*”—and we drop from these *sublime* heights and descend to earth’s realities.

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Those only who have lived “an easy distance” from town can tell how *hard* a life that man leads who takes, what is called “A Place,” four or five miles removed from the London turnpike, for his own gratification as he then believes, but in reality, as he soon after discovers, for the exclusive benefit and enjoyment of those friends and acquaintance who are kind enough to *take the dust*, to visit him, and thereby seek a respite from the tedium and cares of their own much-worn and wasted establishments; the which disinterested motives induce them to cast themselves, with their residue of town *ennui*, upon their rural friends for a whole day to gether, under the plausible pretext of a morning call—to say nothing of more permanent intentions—a trespass which can only, in well-regulated society, be attempted or tolerated in what is, by courtesy, termed—a *country house*.

When a town-bred man, after a life of city turmoil and fashionable apings is tempted to seek out such a residence, wherein to wind off the unused thread of his existence, it may be assumed that his



original inducements are quiet and repose, a secure retreat from noise and impertinence, a remove from every-day bores, whose penetrating quality no street door is at all times strong enough to resist. Seclusion, leisure, and, haply, *economy*, make up the sum total of a man's motives for commencing, in the autumn of his age, an entirely new mode of existence, in order to live more to *himself*, and *with* those who form the dearer portion of self. Are these speculations realized by his new scheme of life? *Nous verrons.* -

We all know that exclusiveness is as imperiously insisted upon in a residence four miles out of London as at Almack's itself; for your Cockney cottage—your “*Cake-House*,” supposes not only absence, but *distance* from the great city, or it is nothing. To be situated *really* a hundred miles away from London, though in the narrow heart of a provincial town, if your dwelling be in itself commodious, and its adjuncts respectable, no earthly objection can be urged; on the contrary, near neighbourhood is, in that case, not only desirable but requisite for social purposes, and at the same time indispensable to the provision of your every-day comforts; but, to ride or drive to a residence four or five miles only, out of our great metropolis, and not to be able, when there, to fancy oneself an hundred miles removed, and sheltered from human ken, is out of all taste and intention. Then, indeed, is the glimpse of a neighbour's chimney-top, peering

above our trees, insupportable—for, to enjoy measureless content in such a place, it is necessary that we ape our children in their recreations, and constantly “*play at,*” *being far away from town,* otherwise we might as well be *in town,* as assuredly we should be in less than half-an-hour, if we wished it.

It may be inferred from the rhapsody which so fantastically heralded my theme, that in my early days I cherished an inbred prepossession for a country life, the which, in maturer years (*mis*) led me into purchase of *a place out of town.* One of such pretensions as befitted a man of moderate desires and modest means to covet and sustain—namely—a pretty, simple structure, apart from the high road and joined to an acre or two of lawn and garden-ground, with a paddock for my cows, and a pretty upland in the distance, which I fondly described as *a prospect.* On one side a sheet of fair water,—by persons of taste and good breeding, called *a lake,* by others *a pond,* by the ignorant, *a river,* and by the vulgar and ill-natured, *a pool.* In short, my cottage possessed all appliances and means to boot, for genteel ease, and simple comfort, with a couple of spare beds for particular friends. With such accessories to happiness and tranquillity, my family and myself took possession of this little paradise in which all my life-long reveries had led me to expect unmixed, unalloyed felicity. “*My golden dream was out ;*” we entered our rustic home

early in the year, when nature was all promise and ourselves all hope. Before, however, we could be called *settled*, our numerous, and *enquiring* friends found us out, notwithstanding our having jealousy kept all but one or two in dubious knowledge of *the* spot, naturally wishing, for a time, to devote ourselves exclusively to some alterations, and to the putting "things" in order. But our secret made itself wings, and flew around our circle like wildfire. Indeed, the season was not favourable to such concealment—the spring was more than usually mild, and London unusually vapid. Our projected arrangements were consequently much retarded by the friendly avidity of every body to satisfy themselves that the place to which we had retired was one worth visiting us in, and strange to say,—as it was vexatious, the very people whom we had left town principally to avoid, were amongst the earliest to find out, and follow us ! Thus, company poured in daily. Dinners, indeed, at this early period were confessedly and obviously out of the question—"house half-furnished," — "plate unpacked," — "servants unprepared—strangers to the localities, &c. &c.," were our excuses: hot luncions, therefore, for a time supplied the place of more solid refreshment; but all our visitors were so charmed with this sort of entertainment "so devoid,"—as they said—"of ceremony—so off-hand—so unlike London stiffness and formality," that it was often dusk before our morning-callers could prevail upon

themselves to turn their backs upon the “sweet place!”—and it seemed to us inexplicable, how such ardent admirers of rusticity could fix their own habitations and habits in the coil of a metropolis. The generally late period of our visitants’ return to town—which seldom left us with a speck of day—rendered it impossible for ourselves or our servants to resume our morning’s arrangements, and my wife and I had only time to sit down to our simple meal, harassed and spirit-worn by the invasion of guests—on every occasion resolving that the next day should atone for the waste of that departed; but ere we could again proceed with our operations, fresh arrivals surprised and engaged our attention and occupied our time. Again we were required to exhibit every room in the house, again we were forced to parade over every spot of ground about it, again we pointed out and enlarged upon the capabilities of the place—explained the alterations meditated, the improvements projected, the plans to be executed, *et cetera, et cetera*. Daily we had to combat the objections of some, and the propositions of others, whose suggestions, not altogether meeting our pre-conceived ideas of taste and expediency, we found considerable difficulty in answering, unless by a bland adoption.

One friend strenuously recommended me to “*get rid* of the cedars,” (of half a century’s growth, and in full beauty!) Another—a wheezing, waddling, panting, puffing, asthmatic animal,—advised me

"*by all means*," (but those practicable) "to remove the large trees to a greater distance from the house, because," he assured me, "they choked up the free current of air and suffocated respiration." A third—a withered, chilly mortal, whose bones boasted of more flannel than flesh, "detested deciduous plants, they were so cold and bare in winter," and insisted that only evergreens should be retained; and he almost grew *warm* in support of his opinion, till the recollection that he never dined out of town, except in the dog-days, cooled down his heat to its usual temperature. Then—our wretched hypochondriacal friend, Mr. Dismal, expressed his serious objection to a *ha, ha!* and his sickly wife with her eternal charnel-house cough—which like Trincolo said (fifty times a day)—as plain as cough could speak—"I would fain die a *dry* death,"—shuddered at "*the river*," asking my wife whether she was not aware "that *stagnant* water near a house was very injurious to the lungs?"

A timid, but determined, fox-hunter thought the gates in the field "much too high, and the ditch far too wide." While a fierce Agriculturist and a New-market man, were for immediately pulling down my new green paling, both agreeing on the general expediency of a *hedge*.

Old Commodore Honduras, whose wooden leg acted like a dibble all over my velvet lawn, laid deep stress at every step he took, upon the desirableness of covering the whole green space with "*good, solid*,

*gravel*, instead of *turf*,"—and a wealthy stock-broker, who had vegetated all his life in a dark court at the back of the Exchange, opposed the taste of a lackadaisical Miss, who lisped out her wish that my wife would cover all the beds "with *violeth* and *rotheth* only,"—maintaining his opinion in support of *sun-flowers*, *marry-golds* and *stocks*, which he pronounced to be "much more *richer*." Such discrepant tastes, of course, rendered it impossible to agree with one without piquing the rest of our kind advisers: hence, we considered, that to obey our original intentions was the most prudent as well as the most pleasant plan. My wife, therefore, calmed down the fervour of the women by telling them, confidentially, that she had made up her mind to let me have every thing my own way and submit implicitly to my arrangements. While I whispered to the husbands—with a shrug that implied a lamentable lack of influence in such affairs—that I had no voice in the business, which I left entirely to the management of my wife. At length, that is to say, in about a couple of months we were, in great measure, established in our new abode. The primrose, crocus and snowdrop, had modestly given place to the anemone and other floral harbingers of summer, and

"Grand-dame Earth with a new livery,  
Now diapered with varous flowers, and  
Checkered with delightful objects——"

every part of our grounds. All was enchanting. I seemed to flit on wings and tread on air, and my wife and myself looked fondly around us, fully satisfied of the wisdom of our choice; and we might aptly have exclaimed, in echo of our thoughts, while gazing upon our new home—

“Marry, peace it bodes, and love, and quiet life,  
And—to be short—what not that’s sweet and happy!”

We had not, however, yet commenced our purposed plan. Unbidden idlers still came to occupy our mornings; and, with a view to abate these early intrusions, luncheons were prematurely swelled into dinners. Sooth to say, although the primary objects of our leaving town—where, since my marriage, I had somewhat “disabled my estate by shewing something of more swelling port than my faint means could grant continuance”—were to keep aloof from London habits and expenses, to enjoy each other’s society without interruption, and to become, as it were, acquainted with our children; yet we could not, we agreed, allow ourselves to be considered absolute churls by our former acquaintance. No; liberality (and I fear I must in candour add—*vanity*) demanded, that all must dine with us, at least, *once*, if only to see the little Eden we had chosen, and the manner in which we henceforth intended to live; but, as we were pre-determined not to return their visits, but to confine ourselves to the select few—with whom we wished to establish an easy, provident intercourse—this stinted hospi-

talities to "the general," could not, we argued, break seriously upon the rigid system of economy we were bent upon pursuing, while it would rescue us from the invidious charge of sordid reserve, and the object which induced our retirement would be at once recognized and gracefully accomplished. One determination above all others we had made—namely, not to visit or be visited by our immediate neighbours, therefore, in return for their calls of courtesy, we simply *left our cards*, a sufficient hint, we deemed, that it was not our wish to become intimate; in truth, we were cautious to an extreme not to involve ourselves in local society, for as we meant to break through so many of our old ties, it was not to be expected that we could think of forming new ones of minor interest. To our town intimates and friends, therefore, we gave a series of invitations to what we modestly, and perhaps *affectedly*, called—"the simple entertainment of a cottage." But although these invitations were not repeated, our days and nights were as entirely devoted to visitors as we had found them when in town; and at length we deemed it expedient to be candid in declaring our motives for having relinquished our London establishment—namely, "the too great expense arising from frequent visitors—a daily yearning on the part of myself and wife for retirement and leisure—the necessity of educating and providing for our children, &c. &c." In the prudence and propriety of all which, our hearers



warmly and approvingly concurred, but at the same time it was clear, that while they lauded our plan each made him- or her-self (as the case might be), an exception to it. Every body praised, nay fervently commended our prudent views of retrenchment, but nobody, in effect, gave into them. All declared that dinner-giving was but a thankless expense, yet each seemed determined to receive as many as they had ever had. I was, it is true, candidly advised by discreet and friendly individuals, to think only of the interest of my family, but at the same time it was plain, that each adviser expected to be considered *one* of that family ; they had no objection to offer to the exclusion of others from our hospitality, but it was evident that they did not feel it requisite to be excluded from it themselves, besides which, these people were so charmed with our cottage, that they were not content to come to it themselves only, but not unfrequently “took the liberty” of introducing their relations and friends—just to take a *peep* at its beauties ; and, as by a *curious* coincidence, all these *peepers* sought this gratification about half an hour before our stated dinner-time, it happened that their *peep* extended to the dining-room, where immediately after, as a matter of course, additional covers were laid for the admiring strangers. In this unsatisfactory manner our time—our *wine*—rapidly vanished, and our *spirits* followed as the natural sequence, till

“ That climax of all earthly ills,  
The inflammation of our weekly bills”—

led me, in a pensive moment, to open my banker's book, where a startling *Per Contra* warned me to revise my general expenditure, and once more dive into the depths of my domestic disbursement ; and, finding it indisputably and seriously augmented instead of reduced by my prudential plan, I began to doubt the soundness of my policy ; and the increasing influx of company at my table, with its unremitting calls upon my time as well as my purse, at length convinced me that perfect felicity was not necessarily a concomitant of rusticity, as I had imagined, in my *simplicity*.

This discovery gradually produced a change in my hitherto placid temper. I became sour and peevish to all about me ; discontented with myself, and my ill-humour soon ceased to be *only occasional*,—it became a quotidian fever of my mind, and from becoming dogged, I was at last *rabidly* excited. I snarled at my wife, growled at my servants, snapped at my children, and flew at my friends' opinions when contrary to my own. In effect, my wife was pained, my children frightened, my friends silent, and my servants sulky. With the latter I was so invariably savage, that they declared, amongst themselves, that " Master was certainly *mad*," and—" give a dog an ill-name,")—I one morning, after one of my ebullitions, overhead my wife's Abigail caution the new *Mal-adroit* footman (an English embodiment of the French *Jocrisse*, who invariably irritated me by his stupidity)—to " keep out of his Master's way,"—adding, to the palpable dismay of

poor *clod*, that I had “just *bit* off the gardener’s nose for only asking me a civil question !” It was indeed too true that I became utterly irrational to every body, and shunned contact with my family as much as possible ; not that I was a whit better tempered when *solus*, for I then quarrelled, almost irreconcilably with *myself*. I also took to the vulgar brutality of kicking my dogs and whipping my horses, on every petty provocation. Trifles of a ludicrous nature, which were wont in happier moods to create a smile upon my face, now only served to put it in a pucker. One morning my favourite poor *Grouse*, a setter, whose flapping ears had never, during his fourteen-year-old-life, been raised by the sound of a gun, or his eyes enlightened by the sight of a bird, I discovered actually *making a point* at a fussy old hen with a brood of chickens, which, to please me, my wife had placed under a coop upon the lawn. In a tone that seemed borrowed from Jove’s loudest thunder, I put him *at fault*, by telling him not “to stand there making such a ridiculous donkey of himself at *his* time of life,” enforcing my precept by a sharp stroke of my cane, which brought the poor creature howling at my feet. How I *hated* myself at that moment ! nor could I expect the poor beast to be any longer attached to such a brute ; but I was mistaken, for an apologetic pat or two raised the poor sufferer upon his legs, whose only revenge for my beating him, was to lick my hand, which simple action more wounded my heart than his most biting reproach could have done.

While his speaking eyes looked pityingly up at mine as if—not to speak it profanely—they said, dear Master,

“To err is human—to forgive—*canine*.”

One morning, I savagely drove my youngest boy in tears to his mother, because the little fool ran screaming after me down the lane, with the alarming intelligence “that the ducks were drowning themselves in the pond!” Another time, after vainly attempting to rein in an old hard-mouthed hack that I had hired to convey me, sometimes, out of the reach of home vexations, and who *would* affect a canter when I wanted him to trot, I was so far carried away by my ill humour, after tugging and pulling unmercifully at the bridle, as to use the ungracious words of his Grace of Buckingham, and wish the obstinate old Cockney beast “*married and settled in the country* ;” at which bitter sarcasm he fell upon his knees,—whether in deprecation of such a fate, or for private reasons (not revealed to me by his master), I knew not, but dismounting and helping him to rise, many other invidious and biting reflections upon pastoral life escaped me as I led the beast home by the bridle, through a lane ankle deep in mud, concluding with our great lexicographer’s opinion, namely, that “people who are tired of London are tired of life.” In truth, I was rapidly merging into my second Londonhood. I more than once detected myself leaning, with favour

approaching to fondness, towards the "sweet shady side of Pall Mall," and every moment found myself more willing to renounce

"the pomp of groves and garniture of fields ;"

for the groves of chimneys and garniture of *fal-balas* in the gay window panes of Bond Street and Cheapside. I yearned for the populous obscurity of my native city, and longed to shelter myself once more in the dim solitude of Town which, I now discovered to be most calm and secure, and certainly the most economical :

"This was not heresy, but reformation."

I remembered too that, when in town, we were able to say *Not at Home* with occasional success, but now, in our "Retreat," the name which we had endearingly given to our cottage, it was unavailing. No one would take a denial ; no wariness could evade our pursuers ; all *would* enter upon one pretext or another. Pedestrians, who, for the most part, like "captains, are casual things ;" single men of certain habits and uncertain means, fond of the flavour of other men's kitchens, who profess to find air and exercise necessary to their *existence*, and leave daily their cheerless chambers with a latch-key in one pocket, and a toothpick in the other ; they, after so long a walk, naturally required to rest themselves ; while visitors *à cheval*, and those

who rode in carriages, *as* naturally desired to rest their horses.

The first time I had ventured to deny myself, a polite party pushed by the timid servant—a *haw-buck* whom I had, in keeping with my rustic plan, hired in place of our smart, knowing, town-bred footman—as he stood with the gate in his hand and a lie in his mouth, discovered me in all my glory, namely, without my coat, stooping down to root up some envious weeds which I had detected amidst my favourite plot of flowers. An irrepressible titter which I heard, occasioned me to rise awkwardly from my undignified occupation—for surprise is an acknowledged enemy to the Graces—and with a glow on my face, which might have paled the peony, from confusion, I hurriedly declared that I was very glad to see them ; and, in reference to my *Not at Home*, assured the hateful intruders, that although I desired to be denied to every body else, I would not have had *them* sent away on any account(!). This gratuitous falsehood, which, “ if the gods did hear, I hope they’ll pardon,” suggested by a nervous embarrassment not to be controled, brought upon me the just reward of my sin and folly, for the whole party congratulated themselves upon their perseverance in forcing their impudent way, and promised me that in future they would not take my servant’s word for my absence, but enter at once and see for themselves.

"But where," they enquired, "is dear Finsbury?"

"Oh!" I replied, "she is out; gone to Town."

This additional disingenuousness, into which I was led in order to hasten their departure, by depriving these odious people of further excuse for stay, only confirmed their pre-disposition to regret for "they could not," forsooth, "*think of going without seeing her.*" Thus newly-perplexed, finding the detestable speakers quite sincere in their declaration, I ordered in a tray (oh! that tiresome tedious, noon-tide, nuisance), and while my mentors were occupied with its interesting contents I slipped up stairs to my wife's *boudoir* to give a hint, which compelled her to leave unfinished letter to her sister in India, which press required to be dispatched that day; and, after a ring given by her own maid at the gate-bell, in time to enter, kerchiefed and hooded, as if returned from a drive, which imposition she acted with a honest blush upon her cheek, which at once reproved my folly and her own deception. After some tedious and exasperating delays, the cormorants returned unwillingly to town, but quite upset us and our affairs for the day, leaving us heartily ashamed of the meanness and duplicity we had been impelled to practise in the management of our domestics, and by which no advantage had been gained.

After eating our dinner in mortified silence

rest of the evening was wasted in devising schemes by which we might in future avoid such impertinent intrusion, without compromising our sincerity, and setting our children and servants a bad example. The conventional *Not at Home*, understood by "the meanest capacity" as conveying simply the intimation of *pre-engaged*, had done its average duty in our former residence—but this well-bred London device proved utterly unavailing out of town; nay, it was absolutely and resolutely defied, outraged, and recklessly trampled upon by all seekers of the "Retreat." We had also discovered, that to exclude the neighbouring gossips was equally impracticable. With them, all contrivance and falsehood were fruitless; they must and *will* know your whereabouts and pursuits; to *them* denial is out of the question, for they make no scruple of telling your servant, that they "know his master is within, and therefore need not enquire."

One pouring, pitiless day, having wrapped myself in my *robe de chambre* and the security of the pelting rain, for the purpose of arranging some disordered books and papers in my study, I espied my right-hand neighbour, a withered, yellow-faced, restless, talkative East Indian, whom I knew at a glance by his eternal *nankeens and silks*, and who, under the mask of friendliness, always entered my grounds through the medium of a wicket, which my more



sociable predecessor had allowed him to place between the fore-courts, in order to save the formality and delay of regular admission, insinuating his bamboo legs between the showers, to whet his appetite for dinner upon my patience.

Old Mullagatawney's protruding Bengal optics were, however, on this occasion, not so sharp as mine, and before he caught a glimpse of me I darted out at the back of the house as he entered at the front, and fairly escaped to the extremity of the paddock, where the cow-house gave me shelter from the renewed rain, and thus, for once, baffled his impertinence; but I was cabined, cribbed, confined in the milky-way of the lactescent tenants of the building for at least twenty minutes, and thus, between the horns of a dilemma, left "to chew the cud of sweet and bitter fancy," and ruminate with my sweet-breathed companions, upon the ease and comfort of pastoral privacy, while I was called and bawled for throughout, and without the house, until my old *pest* was convinced that I had for *once* left home without his perceiving my departure. This *pleasant* adventure by "flood and field" laid me up with a weeping, sniffing, sneezing, cold for a fortnight, and may be taken as a mild specimen of innumerable pleasantries with similar results; nor was my poor wife a jot behind me in persecution. One instance will suffice as a specimen of *her* domestic miseries.

Rising one day with a racking head ache, and

desirous of nursing for a few hours, in order to fit herself for the reception of a dinner-party, she gave orders accordingly not to be disturbed, and just as she had composed her throbbing temples on a sofa, a trio of ladies drove up to the gate with the avowed intention of passing a "*long day* with Mrs. Finsbury." Alas ! that long day ! a *threat* figuratively expressed, but *literal* ever in its course to the person visited, for where is the person, whose society is really of any value, that can afford to offer it at so cheap a rate ?

But to return : these *ladies*, incredulous at the early absence of the mistress of the house, descended from their carriage, and my wife's maid had scarcely time to apprise her mistress of the coming events, whose unwelcome shadows were cast before the house, when the poor invalid was forced to rise from her comfortable resting-place, and step by step, story by story, escape, a fugitive from the pertinacious search of a giddy, thoughtless *Mamma*, and two rollicking *Misses*, who investigated every habitable room ; for, be it recollected, that not even *bed-chambers* are always sanctuaries in a "country house," but, after the breakfast-hour, common property to one's familiar friends. The disappointed searchers then descended to the grounds, while the nominal mistress of the place was confined in a wretched unfurnished attic, that had once been a nursery, where, poor prisoner like, she stood dolefully wearing out her eyebrows against the precautionary bars, to see,

“from the place of her retire,” her garden paraded, her choicest fruit devoured, and her rarest flowers plucked, and eventually carried off, by these pirates of private life, as she mentally exclaimed—

“This place our dungeon is, not our *retreat* !”

Well, *maugre* these inflictions, time flew swiftly. In such weather, and so many summer-friends to entertain, we scarcely knew an hour's pause. Each week brought its Sabbath, apparently, to all around—but no rest came to us. Even our highest duties were interfered with ; and we were sometimes led to abstain from public worship, because it was certain that our return from Church would be followed by a train of suburban idlers, who would dally about for hours. Now and then, after the service, we turned our horses' heads in an opposite direction to home, until all the congregation were housed. But this *ruse* availed us nothing ; for we were generally noticed on our return—necessarily through the village—and in five minutes after we alighted, we were broken in upon by the whole population—in- vaded by all the Goths and Vandals of the parish, blood-relations of the famed Paul Pry, who would linger and lounge about the house and grounds until they ascertained the exact size of our dinner-table, the quality of our expected guests, and haply remain, for more certainty, till their arrival, and thus enable themselves to make such observations, and gather such remarks, as might furnish them

with acquisitions vitally important to their evening's *Charivari*, which would otherwise be "stale, flat, and unprofitable." Even my hobbies were, by this sort of people, converted into little less than torments.

I had always loved the Arts, and formerly expended more than I cared to acknowledge upon many dear acquisitions, which I valued for their own intrinsic sake, indulging no vain-glorious wish for exhibiting them, except now and then to a *connoisseur*: but no sooner was my little collection seen by these *Arguses*, than their hundred eyes were perpetually wide open upon them, as the happy medium of general intrusion—a pretext for breaking in upon my own and my family's privacy at all hours with their friends, who, by a happy coincidence of taste, were all described as enthusiastic amateurs of painting, though it was evident, on their first remark, that not one out of ten possessed more judgment than to comment upon the merits of the frames by which they were surrounded; and it was palpable that they, for the most part, accompanied their host or hostess merely as a relief to their dull conversation, and to gratify a passing curiosity, glad of any change or excitement to help off the heavy period they were otherwise condemned to spend until the appointed dinner-hour.

At length, my wife, as well as myself, was heartily tired, nay disgusted, with the life we led. The fond illusion which had prompted it had vanished;

•

the jewel that had sparkled so beautifully in the distance, had, on nearer inspection, betrayed its flaws. The spell of my early fancy had lost its power—my youth's idol had fallen apart, and its hollowness was confessed. I had, in fact, committed a *great error*, and

“ Bitter penance, with an iron whip,  
Was wont me to disciple every day.”

My wife and myself were bent upon resigning our earthly paradise, as our friends flatteringly called it ; and one morning, about the end of July, we rose “ before the world was stirring,” or our persecutors could dream that we were “ *wide awake* ” and slipping between their limed fingers, we swallowed a hasty breakfast, stepped into a pony chaise, and drove quietly to the opposite side of London in quest of a rustic inn, where an unsophisticated landlady supplied us with a roasted chicken, as gritty as the sanded floor of her only parlour, and left us rejoicing over a bottle of her blackest *Day and Martin*, and our security, to discuss the best method of rectifying the *capital mistake* we had fallen into, when we assumed that peace and independence were the natural concomitants of an abode within twenty minutes' drive of all the hollow (hungry) friends we had left, as we hoped, *for ever* in London.

The result of our colloquy may be anticipated. My wife expressed her willingness to forego the

flowers and verdure of our "*Paradise*," for the boughpots and Macadamization of Berkeley Square, and with the gladness of a released spirit, I exclaimed, with the poet—

"Farewell ye straying herds, ye chrystal fountains,  
Ye solitary woods and breezy mountains!  
————— They all are lost to me—  
The busy town must now my refuge be!"

It was definitely settled that, as soon as the autumnal leaves had left the trees, we should take our *own leaves*, and beat our "*Retreat*," (who will wonder at this, after all the pain and trouble it had given us?)—by a distance of four English miles. In pursuance of this resolution, the next day we formally announced to all droppers-in, our intention of dropping off—and great and grievous was the amazement thereat. Our *friends* were clamorous and unanimous in their disapproval. Our worthy neighbours "*surprised*,"—and all, with eyes and hands upturned, in admiration of what they called our *Spartan* fortitude, asked how we *could* renounce so sure a refuge from care and inquietude? We owned that it certainly *was* a sacrifice, but pleaded in excuse, the *serious* drawback of *distance*, which precluded our *returning the visits of our* numerous town-friends. This consideration evidently struck those present as a *very* serious one, and a meditative silence succeeded this unanswerable objection, which, it was clear, had never occurred to *them* as an impediment to our recent mode of life. Our immediate

neighbours were racked by conjecture as to who might succeed to their prying impertinence—and old Mullagatawney, with an appearance of feeling for which I had not given him credit, assured me that, for his own part he “should *miss us exceedingly*—should our successors be determined to close up the *friendly wicket*.”

It is now several months since I resigned my pretty cottage into the hands of a master of more *entertaining* ability than myself; while it was mine, it is pretty clear I enjoyed little of the repose, none of the retirement, which I sought and expected; but, as it is believed that all partial evil is universal good, and that “profit springs from husks discreetly used,” I am benevolently desirous to offer up my experience and myself, as a beacon-warning rather than an example for the benefit of all rurally-inclined, economically-disposed, and domestically-determined cockneys—(*cakes*) who may haply, in their unbroken simplicity, ponder upon the advantages and delights to be found in a dwelling situate as aforesaid—within “a stone’s throw of *every thing*”—*bores* included.

Be it here observed, that in taking up your abode within so short a distance of “every thing,” you have to seek in the great city all your pleasures, most of your comforts and conveniencies—while the time of the owner of such a place is necessarily divided between a provision for the entertainment of his friends and entertaining them, the enter-

tainer has nothing that he can call his own—save his pillow—and even that is not at all times sacred from intrusion ; every room in a “ country house,” being expected to be open as the owner’s heart, every inmate practically asserting a right over all that *was* his—the dinner they partake of, being but a portion, though a principal one, of the general expectation.

In an urban residence it is otherwise. There your hospitable sacrifices are bounded to the *salle à manger* and the drawing-room. When you have given a dinner in the one, and a cup of coffee in the other, no further demand *can* be made upon your courtesy for the time being ; and your visitors duly depart, leaving you the undisputed monarch of all you survey. They cast no longing, lingering, look behind ; they are *satisfied* ; and retire cheerfully to their own homes, possibly lauding your agreeable hospitality, certainly considering the propriety of a meet return. But the owner of a “ Country-House” finds no such considerate results ; the generality of *his* visitors, though of keen and insatiable appetites for rural *fêtes*, and of unbounded stomachs for the reception of the good things therein implied, have no bowels that yearn to afford reciprocal enjoyment. With *them* it is enough that they prove their recollection and regard by coming so far to visit their rural friends, who, it is considerably assumed, *can* have no desire, even for a day, to quit their own agreeable tenement and its sweet surroundings for the



ceremony, hot rooms, and late hours of London dinners ; nay, their very choosing to remove from such locality and habits, is a proof that they do not desire to be invited back to them ; and it would be fruitless to ask such a *sacrifice* as their quitting home ; for what is permitted *à la ville* is absolutely forbidden to those *à la campagne*, namely, change of scene ; variety is deemed unnecessary to the rural man ; for *him* to be absent from his post is, in truth, a trespass against good breeding and the expectation of his friends, who reasonably fancy themselves “ *ill-used gentlemen*,” if, after the trouble of driving, riding, or walking out to see him, he is absent. In such cases it is undoubtedly nothing less than “ unhandsome ” to be sent away unsatisfied. What business have people to take a house out of town, and not remain at home to receive their friends, especially on a *Sunday*, when they have nothing else to do, and London shuts them out ? Besides, how can men of business, who are laboriously occupied the whole six days in laying up a fortune, exist without a mouthful of fresh air on the seventh ? “ *I can’t !* ” said one of these hebdomadal sponges one day in my hearing, “ *I can’t ; and what’s more, I won’t !* ” And yet this man, who never imbibed a glass of wine, or ate a deliberate meal at his own expense, or gave one to his best friend, was said to have scraped up, in the greasy purlieus of Pudding Lane, at least a *plum* !

Further ; it is no small aggravation of the enor-

mities of omission, if any dinner-seeker be allowed to go away without an invitation to remain. Such treatment is undoubtedly "*shabby*;" it matters not what unexplained cause actuates the master of the house, his reason for abstaining from adding to his party, whether, in fact, no room be left for even *one* interloper at his overcharged dinner-table; is there not in every well-appointed house a *side-table*? and if so, what excuse can there be for such inhospitable conduct? None in the world; and the aggrieved person has an acquired right to speak all the ill he can of the offending party; and not knowing where else to "bestow" himself, and compelled to pay for a chop at his club, can it be wondered at that he should whisper a mutual friend, whom he encounters during his fit of indigestion, that he suspects that fool Finsbury is going headlong to the d—l with his country-house, for he had just left him with his table so full of company that he had not room for a solitary addition.\*

\* Amongst other dinner-giving "miseries," may be placed the annoyances arising out of the(*ir*) regulations of the Rural-Post, which, like *true love*, never *did* run smooth, upon the casualties of which your London correspondents never think of informing themselves. Wherefore, it often happens, when you have actually *invited* a dozen people to dinner—and reluctantly omitted to include several very desirable friends, for want of space—that no more than eight or ten of the invited appear; and the absentees, who have caused a tiresome waiting until your dinner is utterly spoiled, your cook in a phrenzy, and your punctual guests flat and out of spirits by the delay, have,

Then, to allow a spare bed to cool is a violation of all social warmth. To permit a self-invited or stray guest to return to his own home at night, when it is known that you have a chamber or a couch unoccupied, is a trespass against the calls of humanity. It may be that your own immediate concerns claim your undivided, uninterrupted attention—you may not be in health, humour, or spirits for company—your children may be ailing, your servants indisposed, and yourself and family desirous to be alone—with such considerations your friends have nothing to do. If a man *will* live out of town, he must take the consequences—his visiters are not bound to be answerable, much less to suffer inconvenience, for them; and if he feel incompetent to the due performance of the obligations of such an undertaking, why place himself in so responsible a position? It is “*decidedly an affront*” to be sent out on a damp and uncomfortable evening, or in-

as it subsequently appears, put their apologies confidently in the London post-office at noon, to inform you that they are prevented the pleasure of attending your dinner party at seven, and flatter themselves, that by this considerate precaution, they have given you time “to supply their places at your hospitable board.” This polite intimation, of course, consoles one at the next day’s breakfast table, for the absence of the writers the evening before. To add to this agreeable *contre temps*, the defaulters are sure to make their appearance, unasked and unexpected, on some after-occasion, when your table is full, and a party assembled ill assorted to their taste, and the last people of all your acquaintance that you would willingly have introduced to the unlooked-for comers.

deed *any* evening, after spending a pleasant day, when a well-appointed bed-chamber is to be had on the spot.\*

Then your carriage, your horses (for be it noted, *en passant*, that people who in town never thought of a carriage or horses of their own, must have *both*

\* Here may be noticed some of the innumerable evils attendant upon the sort of unpremeditated, *impromptu*-accommodation. If it be *winter*, fires must be lighted to air the room. If summer, the same process must be resorted to in order to *air the linen*, and this, just as the servants are prepared for rest; in fact, the preparations for the unexpected occupant of the *blue-room*, inevitably keep the whole family up at least an hour beyond all customary time, and when all is, at length, in readiness for this troublesome person, it happens that at the last minute of the "eleventh hour," when you are taking leave of him for the night, with a yawn, a tiresome discussion arises about the next morning's meal—and it is ten to one that your guest announces himself habitually an earlier riser than yourself—or, that urgent business will force him to depart at an unusually stirring hour, though he is kind enough to beg that he may not disturb the family, as he is *used* to breakfast alone. Politeness, however, insists upon your rising at his stated time, and giving orders accordingly, in his presence, to be called betimes; the next morning you unwillingly rise—with your establishment—two hours before the customary period, to await at your breakfast-table the expected appearance of your inconvenient visiter, and where you and your family sit yawning and sighing in each others faces (possibly a wet day), without even the solace of the daily paper,—which it is too soon to expect, until your *ordinary period of breakfast*, when the object of all this discomfort lounges deliberately into the room, with a cool apology for having kept you waiting, and a calm surprise at *finding it so late!*

in a “ place out of town”)—these, with your servants, are expected at all hours, and in all seasons, to be in active readiness, and their services as freely at command, as though they were hired and paid for by your guests.

What, then, are the results of your prudential speculation—the advantages ensuing? What is the final amount and gain? Let us state the items, and calculate the utmost sum.

First—*Your Seclusion* (as *Mistress of the house*).

To be driven from the enjoyment of your own comfortable apartment, to seek concealment in a miserable garret, where no lady can be looked for, by the rude pursuit of people whom the warder of your gate in vain opposes—who, weary of the monotony of their own houses, fly from the monster *Ennui*, in quest of novelty and excitement;—persons fond of dropping-in upon ready-made comforts, reckless of the how and when obtained, and find those flowers sweetest which they pluck from a neighbour's ground. In such *seclusion*, to see the “ rude disturbers of your peace,” after they have examined every interior object of interest, prowl about your garden, eat your fruit, and pull your flowers, until their *Bêtes* are *Baited*.

*Your Privacy* (as *Master of the house*).

To be impelled to take shelter from the persecu-

tion of an excruciating *Bore*. To be kennelled, with horned animals, in a damp out-house, where no gentleman can be supposed to lurk : there to catch a cold, that lays you prostrate for a fortnight after, and leaves a residue of rheumatism, which, by Homeopathic instalments, lasts for a whole twelve-month, weather assisting.

*Your Leisure ?*

To dawdle interminably about your grounds with your visitors, until every flower seems faded, and every green leaf yellow to your jaundiced eye, which discolours all its views. Listening to the vapid remarks of every common-place observer, and to the truisms of every twaddling " admirer of Nature," who persists in holding you by the button-hole, while he expounds some mystery in vegetation, which was unfolded to you in your nursery, and which is as clear as noon-day to the meanest intellect.

*Your Independence ?*

Being dragooned into giving dinners to people for whom you do not care a straw, and to admit all that choose to plant themselves, with their children, and servants, upon your premises, from

" Early morn till dewy eve."

In other words, from ten in the morning till eight at night.\*

*Last, and not least—Your Economy ?*

The support of a *House of Call* for Summer Flies and Perennial Sponges, who imbibe your wine, and suck up all your substance. *Trencher-men*, who are taken with the flavour of other men's kitchens, and who prefer their friend's mahogany to their own board, and in the vagrant season of the year, give a decided preference to suburban fare, referring the whole account to Nature, " lovely Nature," who is made responsible for their reckless violations of social propriety, while they thrust their obtrusive persons into the space prepared for the less presuming, and which you would desire to see filled with your better-bred friends, who are utterly " pushed

\* One of the countless annoyances of a house so situated is, that an early morning-call is not only thought *justifiable* but is a warrant for an act of ill-breeding, not tolerated or thought of in a city; namely, the introduction of a nursery of young children, from "*Baby*" up to young *Missy* and *Master*, who are at once ushered into your drawing room with their several female attendants, who, with all their vested authority in their own house, prove incompetent, when in another person's, to protect the owner of it from the measureless vigilance which is necessary, in following, with both eyes, the eel-like motions of the little tribe, in order to rescue your favourite baubles, your *touch me nots* from the destruction of their rude and mischievous handlings.

from their stools" by these marauders. In short, a large sea-chest would be insufficient to contain the multifarious evils of a "Country Box," when opened so near to town, to which *Pandora's* was a receptacle of blessings.

To sum up the moral of my theme. To be the owner of a "Place out of town," *un champêtre réduit*, is to become the keeper of a polite inn for thankless travellers, by whom the constant attendance of the landlord can never be dispensed with; having this essential difference—his customers do not *pay* for their entertainment. To be the keeper of a "Country House" of the aforesaid calibre (*i. e.* to be the *Cake* of a "Cake-house"), is to be one who is simple enough to grow, at great care and cost, the best fruits and flowers for the gratuitous enjoyment of his friends and acquaintance, and to buy them at a somewhat less expence for his own. In fine, the ostensible master of such a place—is never his own master, although he may be termed the most exalted of philanthropists, for he lives for *others*—never to *himself*.

Oh, gentle Jupiter! give me a strong, well-built tenement, of Belgrave Square, or *rus in urbe* of the Regent's Park, (a *Mignonette-Box*) with a porter in my hall cognizant of *Bores*, and all the lounging tribe of eating, drinking monopolizers of one's time, and controllers of one's liberty;—a man who can



steadily and effectively pronounce the three emphatic and essential words which compose the exclusive, and excluding term of—

*“ NOT AT HOME.”*

TO THE MESSIEURS OF THE DIURNAL  
PRESS.

AN UNPUBLISHED LETTER, FOUND IN THE DESK OF  
A DECEASED EDITOR.

“ I see by my paper.”—*Vide MATHEWS's Quid Nunc.*

LEARNED SIRs!—I am one of those persons who look upon a newspaper as one of the daily necessities of life ; and I cannot relish my morning's tea and toast unless mixed up and digested with the news of the previous day : in short, I am what is called *A Constant Reader*. I am not, however, a politician, neither am I a pryer into *Domestic Affairs* that are no concern of my own. And it is with pride I add, that I never suffer my eyes to look into *Private Correspondence* [which I must ever think, when laid open in your columns to general inspection, a most flagrant and unjustifiable breach

of confidence ; but this, you will say, is *your* affair, not mine : suffice it, that I never *have* perused the articles so headed, and never *will*]. I detest scandal in all its varieties, and therefore skip all *paragraphs* ; and never read *advertisements*, unless I find myself in want of a servant or a horse. I take no interest in *police transactions*, because I consider them *low* ; and as for the space devoted to *theatres*, I have long since ceased to place any reliance on the conflicting statements of contemporary criticism, which only serve to involve my mind in perplexity and doubt.

Being now a retired London tradesman, and eke a country gentleman residing in the salubrious village of Camberwell, I find myself with so much leisure, that I think it cannot be better employed than in superintending the education of my children (still young, from the circumstance of my not finding time to marry until late in life) ; and I take a pride in instructing my two boys in all that appertains to the every-day concerns of life, considering such of more value to them than Greek or Latin, —the sons of a *Tailor* having no further occasion for such learning than to know the meaning of the Roman initials *£. s. d.*, more than which they would unquestionably forget in a much shorter space of time than that employed in the acquirement.

In order to qualify myself for the pleasing, though arduous, undertaking I have entered upon, I am careful to inform my own mind upon every matter

likely to prove advantageous to my pupils ; I therefore read diligently every work that falls in my way, from *Doctor Johnson's Dictionary* up to the *Penny Magazine*. And in addition to these sources of useful knowledge—and I hold all other utterly worthless—I *take in*, as I have already intimated, the morning newspaper ; and as I think it a weary, if not a wicked, waste of time to employ myself upon any thing out of my walk of life, I neither trouble my head with *politics* (as aforesaid) nor *fashionable intelligence* ; for since I closed my ledger, and quitted St. James's, I have cut the *Court Circular*,—the habits of high life giving me now no greater concern than a casual glance at my *book of bad debts* is apt to renew.\* Therefore, after *my paper* is delivered, and haply a supplement, by the newsman, and carefully dried, I anxiously turn to the corner wherein the *births, deaths, marriages*, are usually registered ; and on the appointed days, to the *list of bankrupts*, not always without the flutter of old associations. I then *look out*, as Yankees say—[a queerish race them Yankees—never wear a well-made coat—but no matter] I look out for *horrid murders* and *extensive robberies, distressing suicides* and *coroners' inquests, shocking accidents* and *crim. cons., omnibus*

\* Which book, by the way, I have bequeathed to my friend Inkson (the best tailor, since I have given up business, in town). It will remind him of the good-will of a brother snip when he has closed accounts, and dropped from the shop-board of life into his everlasting Sabbath.

*nuisances* and *cruelty to animals*. These, with *high water at London Bridge* and the *printer's name*, include, I take it, what may be called every body's business, and come home at once to the heart and fireside interests of every man of feeling and understanding. Recently, however, my attention has been attracted to a hitherto neglected column, under the head of the *London Markets*. My former residence in the heart of the metropolis rendered these details in a manner unnecessary at that period; but they are valuable in my retirement, and form too important a part of the prosperity of my native city to remain as it were a sealed book to me: in short, this portion of *my paper* has now become subject to my serious attention, and it is upon this varied series of information that I now address you, gentlemen, candidly confessing that the result of my numerous applications to these notices have not been quite so satisfactory as so vital a part of your journal is required to be.

It is true, that in such reports I have often found much to interest and inform; but, at the same time, much more to puzzle and perplex one not duly initiated into the mysteries of "*The Markets*." The terms employed to describe the existing state of things so essentially important to the country at large should, I opine, be comprehensible to every capacity, so that "all that run may read," and reading, *understand*; for, to quote a high authority,

“ Except ye utter words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken ?”

This, under favour, I declare not to be the case, as far as I at least am concerned ; and it follows that, in the perusal of these particulars, while my sympathies are often powerfully affected by the evident fluctuations of merchandise, my understanding is apt to remain unsatisfied. “ Wherefore, let him that speaketh in an *unknown* tongue, pray that he may interpret ;” and I am induced to appeal to your known candour and consideration in behalf of what I must think a *desideratum*—namely (I would suggest), a *glossary of terms* to be appended to each report, for the enlightenment of the general reader, whose difficulties may be inferred from my particular case, which I will illustrate by a few examples selected from your market columns now upon my file—to which I will occasionally annex observations and conclusions, persuaded that they will be sometimes too vague and indefinite to be found apposite to, or agreeing with, the sense of what they would “ interpret.”

By your attention, learned sir, to my suggestion, you will benefit more country gentlemen, I trow, than he who is your obedient Servant and

CONSTANT READER.

August, 1841.

To begin, then, *I see by my paper*,\* and I see it

\* Vide *Herald, Times, Post, &c.*

with *concern*, that “ the London markets have at this time much to complain of;” inasmuch as “ sugar is very heavy and low, and remains in a complete nominal state” [*query sugar ?*]; and to add to this perplexity, it appears that “ the Mauritius are quite inconsiderate” (!). Nevertheless “ refiners have evinced some disposition to buy low lumps [strange refinement !] at the price of raw; but the fine crushed is reduced to a stand-still” [and to a powder, I should think], “ some of it being of a mild greyish yellow, and of a brown ordinary grey” [mixtures which I never saw in any pattern-book since I commenced business]. In another account we are informed that “ coffee, at one time quite brisk” [doubtless while roasting], “ has had a sad fall [probably out of the frying-pan into the fire], “ and the market has been dull in consequence” [how could it be otherwise ?]; while “ Ceylon coffee, heretofore steady and pressing for immediate sale, is now inactive—did not participate in the prosperity of East Indian, and has declined” (!). The natural result of this, it appears, is, that “ East Indian coffee (notwithstanding its alleged prosperity) has been dull, particularly to the unclean qualities” (!) It is also currently reported that “ raisins are in a depressed state, and that the market is out of spirits ” [*with reason, I think*]. Added to this very uncomfortable state of things, “ the sugar market opened this morning without briskness: sugar evidently affected by the reported crops in the West Indies,

the refined being very heavy, and lumps fell" [this sugar must be *double-refined* to be "affected" by so *distant* a report]. We are, however, assured that "rum is very steady, though brandy is heavy, and that a rise has (subsequently) taken place in the commodity" [which surely must have put every body in high spirits]; and, in conclusion, that "about 300 rum puns have changed hands" no uncommon case. Nevertheless it would appear that these wholesale punsters have failed to enliven *all* things about them; for though "tobacco has appeared in considerable animation [a social plant, that !], "black pepper is half heavy" (!). To which is added, that "treacle is held firmly" (!) "Cocoas are described as "rough and dark," and "fair and flinty" [*query*, fair and forty?]; and that while "brimstone has been more sought after than for some time, cream of tartar is neglected;" and "there are no new features in wool" (!). "Young singed bacon meets with ready attention as soon as it arrives, but *Old* bacon moves off but slowly" [*rusty*, perhaps]. "Tallow, too, has been very heavy, and has received no marked attentions," [enough to make it heavy], and "the wool-market is very bare."

The reports which follow are extremely vague in respect to "the fine down combing sorts," the "first and rubbed" and "sound-heavy; as well as bales and tierce middles;" while they are culpably silent upon the existing state of "tittlers and early



clips ;" but the fact seems indisputable, that " there is nothing new in tar !"<sup>†</sup>

" Brandy has been taken sparingly," and " bones are dull " (spiritless, of course ?) ; " lastings are heavy," " silk gloves hang on hand," and " there is a great monotony in cotton hose." Besides which it is said that " pot-ashes are rather feeble," " oatmeal languid," and " lace in a lingering state." And " there is no horse-hair left in first hands !" Nor is the *New York* market more flourishing, for we are assured that there, although "*pearls* continue *firm*" (no thanks to *them*), "*pots* are inactive."\*

- " Hops are very high [this, at least, is as it should be] ; and there is a good inquiry for bags, but pockets have been quite neglected " [this intelligence must belong to the ladies' side of the market]. Then follows the depressing information that " olive oils have a downward appearance, and are without animation"(!); that " cotton has been suspended [not the *Ordinary* Cotton, I hope !]; hemp is on a limited scale ;" " twist has been very flat," and " darbys have fallen off ;" at the same time " merchants hold their stocks from the market," and " cotton is [subsequently] in a very depressed state" [in consequence, I assume, of its recent suspension]; and " tin without change."

Besides all these painful facts, it is moreover

\* We believe this report to be a contraction of *pearl-ashes* and *pot-ashes*. Editor.

asserted, and with every appearance of truth that, at this moment, "there are many conflicting opinions about yarn;" the which may account for there being "few inquiries after East India descriptions;" while "down matchings, and down teggs are especially dull;" "nails and bottles are not enquired for;" and "there is no new feature in bacon or lard!"

To counterbalance these self-evident and soul-harrowing statements, it is cheering to find that "good warp-hogs and shafty wether sorts are much in request;" that "Cork pickled seconds, fustic, and lumps, go off briskly;" that "good old greenish clean-garbled, fetched a good price;" while it is confidently added that "Scotch pork is steady at old quotations" [in the dead languages, I presume]; although "salted Monte Video ox and cow continue dull" [*i. e.* not sapient, like the Scotch pigs]; "still East Indian kips are in demand; wool is rather looking up and the clip is chambered."

Last and not least, as comfort is yet needful, we are confidently assured that "*the Russians continue to hold their tallow with great firmness,*" which only the Russians *could* do in such melting weather.

Having closed my last extract from these elaborate citations, I cannot but feel that notwithstanding the many evils recorded, and the evident contingencies of trade—the manifold causes for deep regret and discouragement during the last year or two—in which calamity has been fruitful, there still

remain (as far as my weak judgment can pronounce) many sources of consolation and support, which must forcibly strike the more sensible and thinking portion of the population. For amidst the wide distress which on every side surrounds us—the appalling state of the country and the crops—the Chartist riots—the working of the poor-laws—the Loo and Kensington Unions, considerably formed to divide husbands from their wives, and mothers from their children—the deficiency of the revenue, and the numerous ills that states are heir to ; added to which, the heart-rending accounts from the Liverpool markets, where, *as per last*, the turpentine trade is quite spiritless, treacle neglected, ginger and rough brimstone, once so brisk, heavy and dull ; while gum sticks on hand, and pot-ashes are absolutely in the dust, what a blessing and consolation it is to reflect that bar-iron preserves its animation, and that bear's grease continues looking up.

THE END.







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